

Green Point Community Needs Assessment for the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge

By

Charles M. Nelson, Associate Professor
Kali Maisano, Graduate Student
Department of Community Sustainability, Michigan State University

May 23, 2019

INTRODUCTION

The *Green Point Area Restoration Project Community Needs Assessment* is designed to effectively engage the Saginaw, Michigan area community to provide the US Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) input regarding their needs and preferences for outdoor recreation and the future management of the Green Point Area of Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). The Green Point Area includes the Green Point Environmental Learning Center and the surrounding 80 acres and the former Germania Town and Country Club property that was donated to the Service by the Nature Conservancy in 2014. The goal is that the Service and the community have a shared vision of restoration and outdoor recreation opportunities that will meet both community needs that are compatible with refuge purposes and ecological restoration goals of the Service.

The project had three phases. The first was background research of existing local, state and federal plans related to outdoor recreation, parks and open space, trails and similar subjects in the Saginaw area. It also involved interviews with a dozen community leaders regarding outdoor recreation, conservation and management of the Shiawassee NWR. This began in May, 2017 and was completed in April, 2018. A final full report of this background information, following internal Service review, was presented to the Service on May 3, 2018 and is provided in Appendix C.

In conjunction with the background research, the second phase consisted of a series of three widely advertised public meetings held in September 2017. They engaged both known groups of interested citizens as well as the general public. The meetings assessed community needs, perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the site in its current condition to meet those needs and the opportunities for site renovation that will better meet those needs, and challenges to bringing those opportunities to fruition. Results of those meetings were reported by the authors to all participants and the Service and were available on the Shiawassee NWR website. The full report is provided in Appendix B.

Third, based on the input from those meetings, interviews with community leaders and input from the Service, a mail survey instrument for a representative sample of registered voters, both Saginaw countywide and targeted at the neighborhood surrounding Green Point was developed by the senior author in October 2017 and submitted to the Service. It was then internally reviewed by the Service and after some modifications sent to the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in March 2018 for mandatory additional review and approval. The OMB

provided written approval of the survey and cover letter in October, 2018. Copies of the final survey instrument and cover letter are provided in Appendix D.

Through the assistance of the Saginaw County Clerk Michael Hanley and his staff, a representative sample of 1,013 registered voters across Saginaw County were selected. In addition, another representative sample of 542 registered voters living near the Green Point Area who were not in the original countywide sample were selected in Saginaw City precincts 9-11 as well as Saginaw Township Precinct 1. The mailing labels were received from the Clerk by the authors December 14, 2018. This was useful timing, as the national mid-term election as well as the State of Michigan general election of 2018 had recently taken place with high voter turnout. This, in turn, strengthened the Clerk's records of registered voters.

Due to the holiday season, the first mailing of the questionnaire was sent by first class mail to the two samples of voters in early January, 2019. This was followed by a second mailing of the full questionnaire in February, 2019 with a cover letter that emphasized this was the last contact with the voters from Michigan State University (MSU) concerning this matter and encouraging their response. The second mailing had all original respondents removed, as well as those sent in the first mailing that were returned as undeliverable by the US Postal Service.

The rest of this report focuses on the results of that mail survey, but also includes appendices that provide the reports from the first two phases of the project: the background research and the community meetings. Again, the key objective of the survey was to understand community support for a variety of initiatives for the Green Point Area suggested in the first two phases and by the Service. In summary, these three phases provide the Service substantial and effective community input, benefiting from known and active stakeholders as well as the populace of the Green Point Area neighborhood and Saginaw County as a whole.

METHODS

The survey instrument was designed by the senior author in collaboration with the Service, including Shiawassee NWR management, personnel from the Michigan Ecological Services Office in East Lansing, MI and from the Regional Office in Bloomington, MN. Once approved by the Service, it was then reviewed and approved by the federal Office of Management and Budget. This process took from October 2017 through October 2018.

Important considerations in the questionnaire were to assess in a representative manner for both the population of Saginaw County and for the residents near the Green Point Area:

1. Their opinions regarding citizen suggested alternatives (during public meetings) for the Green Point Area as part of the ecological restoration of the site as well Service suggested alternatives that were not mentioned by the public during community meetings.
2. Any additional suggestions they may have for the Green Point Area that were not listed in the questionnaire.
3. For those who had used the Green Point Area, their satisfaction with their experiences to date, the reason for that level of satisfaction and the most important action the Service could take to encourage additional use.

4. For those who had not used the Green Point Area, the most important action the Service could take to encourage their use.
5. Their outdoor recreational interests and habits, including the use of area public sites other than the Green Point Area.
6. Basic demographic information to allow comparison of the responses to Census data to assess the representative makeup of respondents.

The first mailing of the survey was sent to the representative sample of 1,013 registered voters from across Saginaw County (including those living near the Green Point Area) and to another representative sample of 542 registered voters not included in the county sample who only resided near the Green Point Area during January 3-5, 2019. Of the first mailing to the county-wide sample, there were 110 completed responses and 66 undeliverable addresses. Of the mailing to the neighborhood sample, there were 22 responses and 59 undeliverable address. The second mailing was sent to the remaining members of each sample with valid addresses on February 9-11, 2019. From the second mailing to the county-wide sample, 822 were mailed, 53 responded and 36 were undeliverable addresses. From the second mailing to the neighborhood sample, 461 were mailed and there were 24 responses and 15 undeliverable addresses. At the conclusion of this process in total, there were 911 valid addresses for the county-wide sample with 163 useful responses (where the survey had been completed or mostly completed), for a response rate of 18%. For the neighborhood sample, there were a total 468 valid addresses with 46 useful responses for a 10% response rate. Four additional responses with a blank survey returned were deleted from further analysis.

RESULTS

Results from the survey respondents will be reported separately for the two samples and they will hereafter be referred to as the county (county-wide sample) and the neighborhood (those living near the Green Point Area as defined by specific Saginaw City and Saginaw Township voting precincts) respondents. It would be inappropriate to combine the samples as this would provide additional weight for residents near to the Green Point Area when considering data at the county level.

Outdoor Recreation Importance and Participation

When asked about the importance of outdoor recreation for their household, both county and neighborhood respondents were most likely to describe outdoor recreation as very important to their household (Table 1).

Table 1. Rated importance of outdoor recreation to county and neighborhood respondents.

Sample	Very Important %	Moderately Important %	Slightly Important %	Unimportant %	Total %
County	60%	26%	11%	3%	100%
Neighborhood	67	22	4	7	100

When asked about the participation of one or more members of their household in Michigan in selected outdoor recreation activities available, walking outdoors was the most common activity for both county and neighborhood respondents (Table 2).

Table 2. Participation in selected outdoor recreation activities during the past 12 months in Michigan by county and neighborhood respondent households.

Activity	County sample participation %	Neighborhood sample participation %
Walking outdoors	87%	97%
Relaxing outdoors	76	73
Driving for pleasure	72	58
Sightseeing	66	62
Wildlife viewing	58	73
Bicycling	57	58
Fishing	52	44
Hunting	45	20
Picnicking	38	44
Photographing nature	35	38
Canoeing/kayaking	32	36
Hiking	30	49
Nature education/learning	20	26
Running outdoors	16	18
Snowshoeing	6	4
Cross-country skiing	4	2
Volunteering: Habitat	4	2
Volunteering: Trails	4	2
Geocaching	3	2
Volunteering: Nature Education	1	2

Of the range of activities done by each respondent household, when asked to array the first, second and third most important for their household, for those at the county level walking outdoors and hunting were most likely to be mentioned as most important. For neighborhood respondents, walking outdoors and wildlife viewing were the most commonly cited most important activities (Tables 3 and 4). When considered across the first, second and third most important activities walking outdoors was the most commonly cited important activity by both county and neighborhood respondents. Of activities characterized as wildlife associated recreation, hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing were cited by more than a quarter of the county and neighborhood respondents.

Table 3. First, second and third most important Michigan outdoor recreation activities for county respondent households.

Activity	1 st most important %	2 nd most important %	3 rd most important %	% citing as 1 st , 2 nd or 3 rd most important %
Walking outdoors	32%	14%	11%	57%
Hunting	13	17	1	31
Relaxing outdoors	10	10	16	36
Fishing	8	17	9	34
Wildlife viewing	8	8	11	27
Driving for pleasure	6	5	9	20
Bicycling	6	7	5	18
Canoeing/kayaking	3	<1	4	8
Sightseeing	2	10	8	20
Run outdoors	2	<1	<1	4
Nature education	2	<1	3	6
Photograph nature	2	2	4	8
Hiking	<1	4	3	8
Geocaching	<1	0	<1	1
Picnicking	0	3	6	9
Volunteer nature education	0	2	<1	3
Cross country ski	0	1	0	1
Volunteer trails	0	<1	0	<1
Volunteer habitat	0	0	0	0

Table 4. First, second and third most important Michigan outdoor recreation activities for neighborhood respondent households.

Activity	1 st most important %	2 nd most important %	3 rd most important %	% citing as 1 st , 2 nd or 3 rd most important %
Walking outdoors	39%	10%	8%	57%
Wildlife viewing	11	5	12	28
Hunting	9	2	5	16
Bicycling	7	16	10	33
Fishing	7	12	10	29
Hiking	7	10	2	19
Sightseeing	4	7	8	19
Relaxing outdoors	2	7	12	21
Canoeing/kayaking	2	10	8	19
Photograph nature	2	5	8	15
Nature education	2	2	8	12
Driving for pleasure	2	2	5	9
Volunteer nature education	0	2	8	10
Picnicking	0	2	2	5
Run outdoors	0	2	0	2

Activity	1 st most important %	2 nd most important %	3 rd most important %	% citing as 1 st , 2 nd or 3 rd most important %
Geocaching	0	0	0	0
Cross country ski	0	0	0	0
Volunteer trails	0	0	0	0
Volunteer habitat	0	0	0	0

When asked about their use of selected public, local outdoor recreation sites in Saginaw County other than the Green Point Area in the past 12 months, county and neighborhood respondents were most likely to have visited the rest of the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge and the Saginaw Valley Rail Trail (Table 5).

Table 5. Visitation of selected, public outdoor recreation sites in Saginaw County during the previous 12 months for county and neighborhood respondents.

Outdoor Recreation Site	County Respondents %	Neighborhood Respondents %
Areas of SNWR besides Green Point Area	57%	60%
Saginaw Valley Rail Trail	57	67
Shiawassee River State Game Area	41	28
Immerman Park	38	44
Wickes Park	28	35
Rust Street Boat Launch	26	35
Center Road Boat Launch	24	40
West Michigan Park	24	40

Green Point Visitors in Past 12 Months

Twenty-six percent of county respondents and 48% of neighborhood respondents reported visiting the Green Point Environmental Learning Center, the rest of the Green Point Area or both. For those who visited neither, when asked about a selected list of factors that may have been barriers to their visitation, a lack of information was most commonly cited barrier by both county and neighborhood respondents (Table 5).

Table 5. Selected reasons that county and neighborhood respondents did not visit the Green Point Environmental Learning Center or the rest of the Green Point Area in the past 12 months.

Reasons for not visiting	County %	County Most Important %	Neighborhood %	Neighborhood Most Important %
Lack of information	52%	38%	61%	46%
Lack of time	42	27	35	17
Not interested	14	7	17	4
Poor health	13	6	17	17
Personal safety concerns	10	2	4	0
Total	NA	100%	NA	100%

Those who had visited some portion of the Green Point Area in the past 12 months were asked about their activities on site. The most common activity that both county and neighborhood respondents noted as part of their visit was walking outdoors, followed by wildlife viewing (Table 6).

Table 6. Activities at the Green Point Area of county and neighborhood respondents who had visited there in the past 12 months.

Activity	County respondents participating %	Neighborhood respondents participating %
Walking outdoors	75%	77%
Wildlife viewing	65	67
Relaxing outdoors	45	48
Sightseeing	40	54
Driving for pleasure	38	23
Photographing nature	35	48
Hiking	35	35
Fishing	22	24
Bicycling	15	41
Canoeing/kayaking	12	5
Nature education/learning	10	14
Running outdoors	8	9
Picnicking	5	10
Geocaching	5	0
Attend public event	2	0
Volunteering nature education	2	0
Volunteering trails	2	5
Volunteering habitat	0	0
Snowshoeing	0	0
Cross country skiing	0	0

For those who visited the Green Point Area in the past 12 months, of the selected activities legal for participation there, county respondents were most likely to cite wildlife viewing as the first, second or third most important to their household (Table 7).

Table 7. First, second and third most important outdoor recreation activities at Green Point for county respondent households that had visited within the past 12 months.

Activity	1 st most important %	2 nd most important %	3 rd most important %	% citing as 1 st , 2 nd or 3 rd most important %
Walking outdoors	30%	14%	6%	50%
Wildlife viewing	12	16	34	62
Sightseeing	12	22	14	48
Driving for pleasure	10	3	14	27
Hiking	5	11	6	22
Fishing	5	8	3	16

Activity	1 st most important %	2 nd most important %	3 rd most important %	% citing as 1 st , 2 nd or 3 rd most important %
Bicycling	5	3	0	8
Relaxing outdoors	2	5	6	13
Attend public event	2	5	3	10
Photograph nature	2	3	3	8
Nature education	2	3	3	8
Geocaching	2	0	0	2
Volunteer nature education	2	0	0	2
Picnicking	0	3	3	6
Canoeing/kayaking	0	3	3	6
Run outdoors	0	0	3	3
Cross country ski	0	0	0	0
Volunteer trails	0	0	0	0
Volunteer habitat	0	0	0	0

For neighborhood respondents who had visited the Green Point Area in the past 12 months, the most commonly cited important activity there was walking outdoors (Table 8).

Table 8. First, second and third most important outdoor recreation activities at the Green Point Area for neighborhood respondent households that had visited within the past 12 months.

Activity	1 st most important %	2 nd most important %	3 rd most important %	% citing as 1 st , 2 nd or 3 rd most important %
Walking outdoors	33%	10%	11%	54%
Wildlife viewing	19	10	22	51
Hiking	10	5	17	32
Photograph nature	10	15	6	31
Bicycling	10	10	0	20
Sightseeing	5	15	11	31
Fishing	5	10	6	21
Relaxing outdoors	5	5	11	21
Run outdoors	0	10	0	10
Nature education	0	5	6	11
Driving for pleasure	0	0	6	6
Picnicking	0	0	5	5
Canoeing/kayaking	0	5	0	5
Geocaching	0	0	0	0
Volunteer nature education	0	0	0	0
Attend public event	0	0	0	0
Cross country ski	0	0	0	0
Volunteer trails	0	0	0	0
Volunteer habitat	0	0	0	0

County and neighborhood respondents who had visited the Green Point Area in the past 12 months were generally satisfied with their experiences with no county respondents and only 4% of neighborhood respondents expressing dissatisfaction (Table 9).

Table 9. Satisfaction of county and neighborhood respondents with the Green Point Area visits during the past 12 months.

Level of Satisfaction	County respondent %	Neighborhood respondent %
Very satisfied	33%	46%
Satisfied	55	46
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	12	4
Dissatisfied	0	0
Very dissatisfied	0	4
Total (a)	100	100

(a) Total may not add to 100% due to rounding

When asked in an open-ended questions about the one most important reason for their satisfaction rating, respondents from both groups were most likely to cite the scenic beauty and peacefulness of the site, the ease of access/convenience of the area or the enjoyment of conservation in an urban area (Table 10). The reason most likely to detract from satisfaction was poor trails.

Table 10. Single, most important reason for county and neighborhood respondents' satisfaction rating of the Green Point Area experiences in the past 12 months.

Most important reason for satisfaction rating	County respondent %	Neighborhood respondent %
Beautiful/peaceful/scenic	20%	35%
Close to home/easy access	20	10
Like conservation in an urban area	14	15
Poor trails	11	10
Observed wildlife	9	5
Good trails	9	10
Like facilities (GPELC, parking, etc.)	6	0
Too many bugs	3	0
Like/enjoy the staff at GPELC	3	0
Like floodplain ecosystem	3	0
Good sense of security	3	0
Children enjoyed the visit	0	5
Lack of open/staffed hours	0	5
Total (a)	100%	100%

(a) Total may not add to 100% due to rounding

Those respondents who had visited the Green Point Area in the past 12 months also rated their sense of security during their experiences. Both county and neighborhood respondents generally felt secure on their visits to the Green Point Area (Table 11).

Table 11. Sense of security of county and neighborhood respondents with the Green Point Area visits during the past 12 months.

Sense of Security	County respondents %	Neighborhood respondents %
Very safe	19%	32%
Safe	60	55
Neither unsafe or safe	16	4
Unsafe	2	9
Very unsafe	2	0
Total (a)	100%	100%

(a) Total may not add to 100% due to rounding

In response to an open-ended question about the most important reason for their sense of security rating, the most common response from both groups was no problems/issues were encountered (Table 12). The reasons associated with a less than very safe sense of security were lack of people around, concern about strangers loitering, concerns about wild dogs, being disabled in a challenging environment, poor trails and concern about potential shooting accidents.

Table 12. Single, most important reason for county and neighborhood respondents' sense of security rating of the Green Point Area experiences in the past 12 months.

Most important reason for sense of security rating	County respondents %	Neighborhood respondents %
No problems/issues	32%	40%
Few people around so don't feel safe	15	7
Feel safe in nature	15	20
Good trails/visibility	9	7
Always risks inherent in nature	6	7
Concerned about strangers loitering	6	0
Poor trails	3	0
Concerned about wild dogs	3	0
Lack of visible patrol unsettling	3	0
Concerned about potential shooting/hunting accidents	3	0
Well maintained	3	0
Good parking area	3	0
No clearly posted rules	0	7
Disabled so challenging environment	0	7
Have concealed carry permit so feel safe	0	7
Total (a)	100%	100%

(a) Total may not add to 100% due to rounding

Support for Public and Service Suggestions for Future Green Point Area Management

All respondents were asked to rate their support for a series of recommendations generated in public meetings regarding the future of the Green Point Area in September 2017. In addition, respondents were also asked about their support for a variety of alternatives that were not directly suggested in the public meetings, but that are useful to the Service in shaping their response to various management situations/questions that have arisen with regard to the future of the Green Point Area.

Table 13 summarizes the major alternatives for Green Point Area management suggested by citizens at a series of three public, community meetings in September 2017. They are listed in the order of most supported to least supported for the reader's convenience, not in their order on the questionnaire, which can be found in Appendix D. Also, when asked in an open-ended question to list the most supported alternative, the answers of respondents are listed in the far right column. The idea with most support (support + strongly support) was to strengthen the links between the Green Point Area and local K-12 schools to promote scientific learning. This was also the idea of all the ideas noted that was the most supported idea by almost half the respondents. The idea with the most opposition (oppose + strongly oppose) was to limit tall vegetation/trees in the Green Point Area near homes in favor of shorter grasses and wildflowers.

Table 13. Rating of support by county respondents for selected citizen suggested ideas for the Green Point Area.

Ideas	Strongly oppose %	Oppose %	Neutral %	Support %	Strongly support %	Most supported idea %
Strengthen links between the Green Point Area and local K-12 schools to promote scientific learning	<1%	0%	10%	45%	44%	48%
Provide enhanced fishing opportunities within the Green Point Area	1	2	30	39	28	13
Better communicate with the public about programs, initiatives, volunteer opportunities and habitat projects in the Green Point Area	0	0	13	46	41	9
Provide trail access to the Tittabawassee River, including for those with disabilities	<1	1	17	47	34	8
Link the Green Point Area to public non-motorized trails in the Saginaw area	5	5	31	37	23	6
Develop a non-motorized trail system at the Green Point Area accessible to the disabled	0	<1	28	39	32	5
Provide facilities accessible to those with disabilities in the	0	<1	21	46	32	4

Ideas	Strongly oppose %	Oppose %	Neutral %	Support %	Strongly support %	Most supported idea %
Green Point Area, including benches and rest rooms						
Offer additional public education and information programs and activities about the Green Point Area	<1	0	22	47	31	3
Renovate the existing Green Point Environmental Learning Center with improved teaching technology, energy efficiencies and more capacity to host visitors	0	4	41	34	21	2
Install live internet camera to show unique wildlife activity at the Green Point Area	3	8	30	34	26	<1
Enhance public transportation opportunities to the Green Point Area	5	5	54	20	17	<1
Provide opportunities for community service at the Green Point Area through habitat restoration and other projects	0	0	24	50	27	<1
Limit tall vegetation/trees in the Green Point Area near homes in favor of shorter grasses and wildflowers	8	14	45	22	10	0
Total (a)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	100%

(a) Total may not add to 100% due to rounding

Table 14 provides the ratings of neighborhood respondents to the same list of citizen suggestions. As with county respondents, neighborhood respondents had the highest level of support (support + strongly support) to strengthen the links between the Green Point Area and local K-12 schools to promote scientific learning. This was also the idea of all the ideas noted that was the most supported idea by half the neighborhood respondents. The idea with the most opposition (oppose + strongly oppose) was to limit tall vegetation/trees in the Green Point Area near homes in favor of shorter grasses and wildflowers.

Table 14. Rating of support by neighborhood respondents for selected citizen suggested ideas for the Green Point Area.

Ideas	Strongly oppose %	Oppose %	Neutral %	Support %	Strongly support %	Most supported idea %
Strengthen links between the Green Point Area and local K-12 schools to promote scientific learning	0%	0%	5%	42%	54%	50%
Develop a non-motorized trail system at the Green Point Area accessible to the disabled	0	2	12	43	43	12
Provide enhanced fishing opportunities within the Green Point Area	0	7	28	37	28	9
Better communicate with the public about programs, initiatives, volunteer opportunities and habitat projects in the Green Point Area	0	0	16	33	51	9
Offer additional public education and information programs and activities about the Green Point Area	0	0	20	37	44	6
Provide facilities accessible to those with disabilities in the Green Point Area, including benches and rest rooms	0	2	12	44	42	3
Provide trail access to the Tittabawassee River, including for those with disabilities	0	2	14	44	40	3
Link the Green Point Area to public non-motorized trails in the Saginaw area	0	2	28	35	35	3
Install live internet camera to show unique wildlife activity at the Green Point Area	0	7	27	34	32	3
Renovate the existing Green Point Environmental Learning Center with improved teaching technology, energy efficiencies and more capacity to host visitors	0	5	28	37	30	0
Provide opportunities for community service at the Green Point Area through habitat restoration and other projects	0	0	14	58	28	0
Enhance public transportation opportunities to the Green Point Area	0	2	49	30	19	0

Ideas	Strongly oppose %	Oppose %	Neutral %	Support %	Strongly support %	Most supported idea %
Limit tall vegetation/trees in the Green Point Area near homes in favor of shorter grasses and wildflowers	7	21	36	21	14	0
Total (a)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	100%

(a) Total may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Respondents also rated alternatives posed by the Service that were not specifically raised in community meetings but which are options for the Green Point Area. They are presented in Tables 15 and 16 in the order of the alternative with the most supporters (support + strongly support). Table 15 provides a rating of support for those alternatives by county respondents. The alternative with the most supporters was a pavilion for an outdoor classroom and other public use. The alternative with the most opposition was to place an emphasis on paved trails over non-paved, hardened trails.

Table 15. Rating of support by county respondents for Service generated management options not brought up in September 2017 community meetings.

Ideas	Strongly oppose %	Oppose %	Neutral %	Support %	Strongly support %
Provide a pavilion for an outdoor classroom and other public use	2%	3%	23%	51%	22%
Provide picnic tables throughout the Green Point Area	<1	6	28	49	17
Allow leashed dogs within portions of the Green Point Area	7	12	24	38	20
Enhance use of the area for outdoor physical fitness	2	5	40	41	12
Place emphasis on hardened, non-paved trails over paved trails	<1	9	44	33	13
Emphasize a self-contained trail system within the Green Point Area rather than a trail system connected to other trails in the community	1	12	49	29	10
Place emphasis on paved trails over hardened, non-paved trails	7	16	46	20	12
Provide additional parking along Maple Street	1	4	64	24	7

Table 16 provides the responses of neighborhood respondents to those same options. The alternative with the most support (support + strongly support) was to provide a pavilion for outdoor classroom and other public use. The alternative with the most opposition (oppose + strongly oppose) was to allow leashed dogs at Green Point.

Tables 16. Rating of support by neighborhood respondents for Service generated management options not brought up in September 2017 community meetings.

Ideas	Strongly oppose %	Oppose %	Neutral %	Support %	Strongly support %
Provide a pavilion for an outdoor classroom and other public use	0%	0%	16%	58%	26%
Provide picnic tables throughout the Green Point Area	0	7	11	59	23
Enhance use of the area for outdoor physical fitness	0	5	29	52	14
Place emphasis on hardened, non-paved trails over paved trails	5	2	37	28	28
Allow leashed dogs within portions of the Green Point Area	16	16	18	23	27
Emphasize a self-contained trail system within the Green Point Area rather than a trail system connected to other trails in the community	5	5	49	33	9
Provide additional parking along Maple Street	0	2	58	35	5
Place emphasis on paved trails over hardened, non-paved trails	17	12	44	15	12

Respondents were also asked in an open-ended question if there was a suggestion they had for the Green Point Area that was not mentioned either in the set of ideas from community meetings or those from the Service. Of those who offered suggestions, about one-third were affirmations of a suggestion already made through the community meetings or by the Service as described in Tables 13-16 and about two-thirds were new for both county and neighborhood respondents. The most common new suggestion in both groups was to increase security at the Green Point Area (Table 17).

Table 17. County and neighborhood respondent suggestions when asked for a suggestion not made through the community meetings or by the Service for the Green Point Area.

Suggestion (a)	County Respondents %	Neighborhood Respondents %
Improve security	17%	17%
*Provide pavilion	17	11
Provide boat launch/fishing pier on Tittabawassee River	8	6
*Improve ADA trails/facilities	8	6
Provide family fun events	8	6
Allow/provide archery deer hunt	6	11
Allow more ATV/vehicle access	6	6
Allow off-leash dogs	3	0
*Provide more public information about Green Point	3	0
*Provide internet cameras of Green Point	3	0
*Provide more trails	3	0
Improve mosquito control	3	0
Have longer staffed hours	3	0
Develop a scenic drive	3	0

Suggestion (a)	County Respondents %	Neighborhood Respondents %
Provide bird aviary	3	0
Improve signage in general	3	0
Keep Green Point natural	3	0
*Provide more physical fitness opportunities	3	6
Provide youth day camps	0	6
Connect to Green Point to rest of SNWR with bridge	0	6
Have more projects with Scouts	0	6
Total (b)	100%	100%

(a) If marked with asterisk *, previously rated in results Tables 13-16.

(b) Total may not add to 100% due to rounding.

In response to an open-ended question that asked what one most important action could the Service take to encourage an initial or more repeat visits, county and neighborhood respondents were most likely to cite better information/marketing (Table 18). Other suggestions that included more than 10% of the respondents in either group were more, well publicized events, improved security/patrol and better trails/trail maintenance.

Table 18. One most important actions the Service could take to encourage initial or additional visitation to the Green Point Area.

Service Action	County Respondent %	Neighborhood Respondent %
Better information/marketing	40%	23%
More well publicized events	10	13
Improve security/patrol	7	10
Better interpretive information/displays	5	0
More/better ADA compliant visitor access/facilities (e.g. pavilion, parking, etc.)	5	7
Uncertain if anything would	4	0
Allow dogs	4	0
More/longer staffed hours	4	7
Better access to river/ponds (e.g. fishing, viewing)	3	0
Better trails/trail maintenance	3	13
Better signage	3	0
Have archery deer hunt	2	3
Provide volunteer opportunities	1	0
Survey has encouraged me to visit	1	3
Boat access to Tittabawassee River	1	0
More wildlife	1	0
Don't allow dogs	1	0
More geocaching opportunities	1	0
Will never visit due to toxic chemical contamination	1	0
Provide free snacks	1	0
Don't allow hunting	0	3

Service Action	County Respondent %	Neighborhood Respondent %
Keep area natural	0	3
Better overall maintenance of area	0	7
Total (a)	100%	100%

(a) Total may not add to 100% due to rounding

Respondent Demographics

Respondents were asked a series of basic demographic question to provide context to help Service managers better understand the results in light of the neighborhood population that responded as well as the county respondents who represent Saginaw County as a whole. The zip codes of respondents by sample group are displayed in Table 19.

Table 19. Proportion of county and neighborhood respondents by zip code.

Zip Code	County respondents %	Neighborhood respondents %
48415	6%	0
48417	1	0
48433	<1	0
48457	<1	0
48460	1	0
48601	8	2
48602	14	63
48603	12	0
48604	7	0
48605	<1	0
48609	8	0
48616	8	0
48623	2	0
48626	6	0
48637	2	0
48638	7	33
48649	2	0
48655	7	0
48722	2	0
48734	5	0
48757	<1	0
48841	<1	0
48902 (a)	0	2
Total (b)	100%	100%

(a) Voter had moved since the election and mail was forwarded to the respondent

(b) Total may not add to 100% due to rounding

For county respondents, the mean age of the respondent was 56, while it was 55 for neighborhood respondents. Respondents were somewhat older than the age of the populace as

measured by the US Census in 2010 (Table 20). Respondents ranged from ages 19-98 in the county and 19-87 in the neighborhood.

Table 20. Age ranges of county and neighborhood respondents and US Census data for Saginaw County.

Age Range	2010 US Census %	County respondents %	Neighborhood respondents %
19-39 (a)	32%	19%	21%
40-59	38	33	28
60 and older	29	48	51
Total (b)	100%	100%	100%

(a) US Census data is ages 20 – 39.

(b) Total may not add to 100% due to rounding.

The characteristics of the respondents’ household are very similar to the US Census data for Saginaw County households per the US Census Bureau in terms of number of household members and percentage with children under 18 (Table 21). County respondents are somewhat less likely to have one or more disabled members in their household than neighborhood respondents.

Table 21. Household characteristics of county and neighborhood respondents and US Census data from Saginaw County.

Characteristic	US Census	County respondents	Neighborhood respondents
Mean number household members	2.4 (a)	2.4	2.4
Percentage with children under 18	31% (a)	27%	30%
Percentage with one or more disabled members	31% (b)	21%	24%

(a) US Census Bureau, 2010 Saginaw County

(b) US Census Bureau, 2013-17 American Community Survey 5-year Estimate, Saginaw County

Table 22 provides the racial profile of respondents and whether they identify as of Hispanic or Latino origin. Respondents answered the question “What races or races do you consider yourself to be? Please check all that apply.” from a list that included the choices below in the table. Some chose to check two different racial categories and others chose to check “other” if they considered themselves to be multi-racial. This information is compared to the 2010 Census for Saginaw County. While there are more recent small samples of Saginaw County residents drawn by the US Census Bureau (Community Survey of 2017), the Census Bureau cautions that those data may have errors of greater than 10% in their results due to very small sample sizes. Hence, the comparison to the more robust, but somewhat older 2010 Census data is used.

Table 22. Racial profile and origin of county and neighborhood respondents and US Census data from Saginaw County.

Characteristic	2010 US Census % (a)	County respondents %	Neighborhood respondents %
Race			
White	75%	95%	91%
African American	19	4	5
American Indian and Alaska Native	<1	2	5
Asian	1	<1	0
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	<1	0	0
Other (including 2 or more races or some other race)	5	2	5
Total	NA	NA	NA
Origin			
Hispanic or Latino	8	3	7
Not Hispanic or Latino	92	97	93
Total	100%	100%	100%

(a) American Fact Finder US Census Bureau QT-P3, 2010 Census Summary File 1, Saginaw County, Michigan

The educational level of county and neighborhood respondents is shown in Table 23 and compared to the US Census 2010 data for Saginaw County. The Census data is for those 25 and older while the respondent data is for all respondents which include a few respondents aged 19-24.

Table 23. Educational level of county and neighborhood respondents and US Census data for Saginaw County.

Highest Education Level	US Census Saginaw County % (a)	County respondents %	Neighborhood respondents %
Master's, Ph. D. or Professional Degree	6%	10%	13%
Bachelor's college degree	12	19	11
Associate's college degree	9	17	20
Some college, not yet graduated	23	28	18
Vocational/Technical school certification	NA	5	7
High school graduate/GED	36	20	29
Less than high school graduate	14	1	2

(a) American Fact Finder US Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5 year average, Saginaw County, Michigan

Table 24 presents employment information from county and neighborhood respondents. Respondents were able to check all categories that apply, hence the percentages add to more than 100 in each column. Data is not gathered specifically in these categories regarding employment by the US Census in this manner for the US Census. However, the US Census estimates that in

2017 a total of 57% of those 16 and over were in the civilian work force in Saginaw County. As the data below shows, when adding those who work part-time and those who work full-time, it is 50% of the county respondents and 49% of the neighborhood respondents. In addition, those who checked only self-employed, and did not also check full or part-time employed, are also in the civilian work force.

Table 20. Work status of county and neighborhood respondents.

Work Status	County respondents %	Neighborhood respondents %
Retired	42%	40%
Full-time employed	36	33
Part-time employed	14	16
Self-employed	13	4
Homemaker	7	4
Student	4	2
Unemployed	4	11

Open-ended Comments

Of the 208 respondents, 63 (30%) provided open ended comments when asked if they had any additional comments to add at the conclusion of the survey. Of these, 20 were from neighborhood respondents and 43 from county respondents. The comments are provided verbatim except for some minor spelling corrections. They provide additional insight into respondent interests and many focus on the association the respondent has had with the Green Point Area, including its past history as a golf course, over their years in the area.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Respondents are representative

The community needs assessment for the Green Point Area received responses from 208 registered voters in 208 distinct households. Those respondents were sampled in a representative manner and provide a useful picture of how the general public in Saginaw County as well as the near neighbors of Green Point relate to the Green Point Area, how they currently use the site and participate in other forms of outdoor recreation related to the site and view future options for the Green Point Area. Overall, the respondents tend to be slightly more educated, somewhat more likely to be white or Native American and slightly older than the population of voting age adults in Saginaw County. In other respects they are very similar to Saginaw County residents per the US Census Bureau.

Outdoor recreation appropriate to refuge property important

Both county and neighborhood respondents felt outdoor recreation was generally important to their household. They were active in a wide variety of outdoor recreation pursuits, many of which are or may be provided at the Green Point Area. Those activities with more than a quarter of respondents in one or both groups participating and listing the activity as important to their household included walking outdoors, relaxing outdoors, fishing, wildlife viewing and hunting for county respondents and the walking outdoors, bicycling, fishing and wildlife viewing for neighborhood respondents.

Satisfaction good but could be better with Green Point Area visitors

Slightly more than a quarter of the county respondents and almost half the neighborhood respondents had visited the Green Point Area in the 12 months prior to the survey. For those who had not visited, lack of information about the Green Point Area was cited as the most important reason for not visiting. For those who had visited, walking outdoors and wildlife viewing were the most common activities. These were also cited as the most important activities at within the Green Point Area for county and neighborhood respondents who had visited. Eight-eight percent of county respondents and 92% of neighborhood respondents who had visited the Green Point Area were satisfied with their visits. For those less than satisfied, the greatest source of dissatisfaction was poor trails.

Sense of safety good but could be better with Green Point visitors

Seventy-nine percent of county respondent visitors to the Green Point Area reported feeling safe during their visit as did 87% of neighborhood respondent visitors. Sources of insecurity were a lack of people in the area, strangers loitering, poor trails, concerns about wild dogs, a lack of visible security/patrol, a lack of clearly posted rules, a concern about potential shooting accidents and concerns about the lack of ADA accessible opportunities.

Strong support for many citizen generated suggestions

Using the suggestions generated from the three community meetings regarding the Green Point Area in fall of 2017, both county and neighborhood respondents had similar levels of support across the suggestions. By far, the suggestion that was ranked as the most supported idea by both groups of respondents was to strengthen the link between the Green Point Area and local K-12 schools to promote scientific learning. Other suggestions with 2/3 or more of county respondents supporting and 5% or less in opposition were:

- better communication with the public regarding Green Point Area programs, initiatives and volunteer opportunities
- enhanced fishing opportunities provided within the Green Point Area
- trail access to the Tittabawassee River, including for those with disabilities
- a non-motorized trail system at Green Point accessible to the disabled
- facilities accessible to the disabled at Green Point including rest rooms and benches
- additional public education and information programs and activities about Green Point
- opportunities for community service at Green Point through habitat restoration and other projects

For neighborhood respondents the list with such high levels of support and minimal levels of opposition was the same except slightly fewer supported the enhanced fishing. Also 2/3 or more of neighborhood respondents supported and 5% or less opposed:

- link Green Point Area to the public non-motorized trails in the Saginaw area
- renovate the existing Green Point Environmental Learning Center with improved technology, energy efficiencies and more capacity to host visitors

Of all the citizen suggestions, only two were not supported by a majority of either group of respondents:

- enhance public transportation opportunities to the Green Point Area
- limit tall vegetation/trees in the Green Point Area near homes in favor of shorter grasses and wildflowers

Regarding the alternatives posed by the Service that were not well covered by the citizen suggested actions, only one had 2/3 of respondents supporting and 5% or less in opposition by both county and neighborhood respondents:

- Provide a pavilion for an outdoor classroom and other public use

The most mentioned suggestion by respondents to an open-ended question asking for additional citizen suggestions regarding Green Point Area management was to increase security.

How to best encourage additional Green Point Area visitation

For both county and neighborhood respondents when asked about the one, most important action the Service could take to increase visitation or spark an initial visit to the Green Point Area was to provide better information to citizens, followed by more well publicized events. Other suggestions made by 5% or more of county respondents were:

- improve security/patrol
- better interpretive information/displays
- more ADA compliant visitor access/facilities

For neighborhood respondents other suggestions made by 5% or more were:

- better trails/trail maintenance
- improve security/patrol
- more ADA compliant visitor access/facilities
- more/longer staffed hours
- better overall maintenance of the area

With this community input from a representative sample of registered voters, coupled with input gained from various community public meetings, formal and informal interaction with many organizations and individuals interested in the Green Point Area and the contact Service personnel have with many in the community and beyond, there is clear guidance for the Service to better meet the needs of the community for wildlife associated outdoor recreation at the Green Point Area as part of the ecological restoration of the site.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors gratefully acknowledge the assistance and cooperation of Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge manager Pamela Repp and Assistant Manager Lelaina Muth throughout the project. They also appreciate the assistance provided by Saginaw County Clerk Michael Hanley and Chief Deputy Clerk Kyle Bostwick in selecting the samples of registered voters and providing mailing labels. The project was funded by the US Department of the Interior 2016 Restoration Catalyst Fund and Michigan State University. Finally, the authors gratefully acknowledge the involvement, interest and enthusiasm of the many citizens who participated in this community needs assessment for the Green Point Area.

Appendix A

Open Ended Comments from Survey Respondents

Neighborhood Respondent Comments

- We enjoy walking through the trails and taking our grandchildren. It would be nice if the ponds could be cleaned up.
- In my opinion, and to my knowledge, there is no public activities at Green Point and unless there is a draw to sportsman and their families, people will not want to go to a park in the ghetto without access to activities. Most people do not know that Green Point is even there.
- Bridge connecting Green Point to the Shiawassee Refuge. Dig out the pond in the middle of Green Point to allow more fish, frogs, and turtles. A few trails connecting Green Point to the Germania portion.
- Very excited.
- I have taken my granddaughter a few times, but I work every Saturday, so it has always been on a weekday and we have never found the education center manned. I wish there were staff there all days so that we could have a more complete and informative experience. I know that is expensive, but we get there and do not know where to go, what to do, or what you have to offer. Thank you for the maps included in this packet, but if there could be notation for points of interest, etc. that would be great.
- Green Point is a great place to walk/run the trails and is always quiet. I enjoy talking to my daughter. She gets excited, as I do, when she sees the deer and anything else.
- I am so heartened to see this interesting area get some attention and possible development for more public use. It is an awesome area.
- About 30-40 years ago we explored the trails at Green Point off and on for years. Our last visit dogs were on the loose and trails were messy.
- We live close to Green Point. Our two kids aged 38 and 33 have families and are on their own. Now with grandkids, we have gone to all the places dozens of times for years. So much so that our son is a biologist and worked for the refuge for three years and now works for the DNR. Our daughter is also a biologist. We brought out the gift of nature in them, I guess. They have always done numerous sports activities. If I knew there were any things at Green Point learning center to take my husband to, especially now that his walking is limited, that would be awesome. He grew up to love the outdoors, hunting and fishing, which he can no longer do. Please inform us of opportunities to make my husband's life better.
- I have been coming here for many years and enjoy it every time. My son loves to fish and hike here.
- When we moved to the township our children (11) were grown and graduated from college. I babysat many grandchildren. Most of the places I checked, I took them to. It's great that we have all the places to visit and take children and the elderly (of which I am not included).
- Look to nature centers in Lansing as a model for growing community engagement. An undisturbed, natural environment that engages in education and community engagement is key towards growing environmental stewardship. Green Point has that potential.
- Thank you for the map.

- Green Point is a gem in Saginaw City! It has great potential.
- Should expand to Bridgeport by the Cass River. Extend River trail south from Bridgeport towards Clio along railroad to Blackmar Rd, would be perfect!
- Thank you so much for the info I received from you on the NWR, dated 1/3/19. It was just a few weeks back I saw a number of geese (6-7) headed to the Saginaw River near the Johnson Street Bridge. At the time I did not recognize what they were because they were so large. My first thought was Wild Turkeys but based on your map they appear to be geese. I am native to Saginaw but I cannot recall geese being so large.
- As an avid hunter, hunters need more land available to hunt for deer. As a long-time member of Germania Country Club, I am happy to see land donated to Green Point.
- Nice place, needs all the help it can get
- When both of us are retired we will have more time to avail ourselves of the activities offered at Green Point.
- I love being outdoors with my family and wildlife is a blessing from God. Any refuge needs to stay thriving.

County Respondents Comments

- I'm interested in visiting now that I know it is there. It is nice to discover something like this closer to home.
- Very nice place, but too old to enjoy. Did at one time, wife lived half mile from the park. Being 85 years old. My mother and dad used this park quite a bit.
- Historically oysters were in the rivers. Is it a possibility today in Saginaw County? What happened to be able to legally operate a snowmobile in the area of Green Point?
- Not sure how I got on your mailing list.
- Plant sections of native trees and also have small open spaces planted with native flowers and grasses. Make it a natural setting. Do not make it like a manicured park. It needs to be natural and native.
- Good idea!
- Very interested! More info so we could visit.
- It would be nice to have rest stops, bathrooms, and paved trails handicapped accessible. Also connect trails to where used to be Germania Golf Course – now mental health. We drive through there a lot. Watch deer and sites, but change would help improvement and mobility for public.
- Keep it open!
- Enjoy being a part of CMH activities and quality of life meeting with groups. Leaning more every day.
- My interests lie in preservation, replacement trees and shrubs for wildlife. High public respect for no trash and no destructive nature activities.
- This used to be a great golf course. Maybe make it into an ORV park.
- Been going there since it opened. Will continue to go. Love it.
- When cleaning debris, especially trees, maintenance crews cut trees with minimal removal and large limbs or trunks of trees are left too close to trail access compromising walking or cycling safety. Also not having access to cement bridge, that covers man-made river/pond, severely diminishes you cycling experience and only leaves you access to half the trail.

- I went to Green Point all the time as a child and I would LOVE to see it back to what it was then or even better.
- I used to go to Green Point as a child and loved it. Now I will not take my children there because I am concerned for their safety.
- Thank you for developing this area!
- You do a good job running it.
- Love that you are trying to save land, we need more protected area. The outdoors is wonderful and more kids need to learn more outside.
- Know nothing about Green Point
- Since this has made me more aware, I will probably visit this summer
- Would like to know more about your programs
- Access for handicap (physically disabled child) with restroom availability
- Keep nature clean and accessible. More outdoor nature trails would be great.
- The former nature center was very close to my home in the Kearsley Schools area. I have been there many times and did a lot of work with the director as we developed our school's 140 acre nature center
- Apply more grant concerns for specific things. Advertise certain highlights like local animals. Advertise what visitors that are disabled can do
- We love Green Point! The trails are fun to longboard on and the nature is beautiful to see.
- SNWR is an amazing place. Motor-toured the place twice during summer 2018. I was surprised to discover the number of Egrets and Cranes available for viewing.
- While I've lived in Saginaw all my life and have known about Green Point, I do not remember going to the area.
- Thank you for the opportunity to express my thoughts
- Thank you, Green Point. Need to get out there this spring and see what it is all about. Hope you all continue to reach high for Saginaw!
- Not enough energy to walk far but love nature, animals, plants, trees, etc. I lived on Zavel St., just a couple of blocks from Germania. If we were there for dinner, I used to love watching the deer come out just before dark to eat.
- I am a member of Saginaw Valley Gardeners and Saginaw Valley Hosta Society. We do volunteer work. Do not think we have been approached to help (in the last 15 years). Master Gardener through MSU.
- Make things fun. Events learning about nature any night. Advertise, make people aware, not just find out on their own. A free membership/email people.
- Green Point is a fine outdoor resource that most people just don't realize is available to them. I've talked about it to a number of people while there that stated they never knew this place existed. More public awareness and just general resources would help. Thank you!
- I thought the recreation area was just for hunting.
- I am going to check it out!
- I have come here since I was a kid and they need to improve it some.
- Have enjoyed Green Point for many, many years. Enjoy it being close by when time is limited. Work in education but have never taken children on a field trip to Green Point
- Allow leashed dogs and a dog clean-up station
- I love to go there when I was a kid. Lots of fun for inner city youth.

- This is an excellent idea to enhance our Saginaw Area. Trail riding and safer bicycling opportunities are very important to my family and friends
- We live only minutes from GP. We'd love to utilize the facilities as well as those trails by the old Germania Club in our front yard!

Appendix B - Review of Plans by Key Local Entities Regarding Community Outdoor Recreation Needs and Conversations with Key Stakeholders Regarding the Green Point Area

Charles M. Nelson, Associate Professor
Department of Community Sustainability
Michigan State University
May 3, 2018

The following report summarizes 12 plans/entities related environmentally, programmatically or geographically to Green Point. It also details conversations about Green Point with key stakeholders of the area (including Refuge staff) and the greater Saginaw Community and some of the organizations/entities they represent.

Saginaw County Park and Recreation Plan 2014-18

<http://saginawcounty.com/Docs/Parks/Saginaw%20County%20Recreation%20Plan%202014-2018.pdf>

The Saginaw County 2014-18 Recreation Plan is being updated as this report is being written. In communication with County Park Director Brian Keenan-Lechel on February 28, 2018 he noted that Saginaw County is going through public input in spring and summer of 2018 regarding the new plan with the goal of an in-force plan ready for 2019-23. No linkages to Green Point/Germania are proposed in the current 2014-18 Saginaw County Park and Rec Plan. Part of the County's efforts going forward include potentially executing a lease with the Michigan DNR for the Saginaw Malleable property to the East of Green Point. This lease is currently not executed and the County is in negotiations with the State of Michigan which they target to conclude in late spring. Should a lease be executed, one area of interest for the county is to connect to the Saginaw River Walk on the east side of the river starting at Wickes Park and to the west with the Saginaw Valley Rail Trail, which is approximately 2 miles West of Green Point along Center Road. This also is adjacent to Leonard Boers III Riverfront Park which is on the north side of the Tittabawassee River and has extensive parking and a boat launch. These linkages present considerable partnership opportunities for the FWS at Green Point if they are willing to allow bicycles, pedestrians and leashed pets on such a trail connection within the Green Point Area.

Saginaw County does propose to site additional canoe/kayak launch/fishing pier opportunities on area rivers including the Tittabawassee in the 2014-18 Plan, but no mention is made of

partnership with Green Point/Germania/FWS in regards to this goal. Their closest site where this has already been accomplished in Boers III Park on Center Road on the north side of the Tittabawassee River.

Saginaw Charter Township Park and Recreation Plan

http://www.saginawtownship.org/departments/parks_and_recreation/index.php

The Township is in the process of updating the plan but no plan currently in force. The update being done by Spicer Engineering. The closest pedestrian pathway runs adjacent to South Center Road and crosses the Tittabawassee River going south and connects to the Saginaw Valley Rail-Trail (Saginaw County Park). There are no non-motorized trail connections going east from S. Center Road in the direction of Green Point. There are two nearby parks west (upstream) of Green Point on the Tittabawassee River:

- West Michigan Park, 5700 W. Michigan which has a picnic area, children's play area and shoreline with a fishing pier
- Leonard Boers III Riverfront, 1928 Center Rd. which has a boat launch and shoreline with a fishing pier

There is no recognition of Green Point or the Green Point Environmental Learning Center on their website.

Saginaw City Public Schools

<http://www.spsd.net/>

Riverfront Preserve, on property owned by the Saginaw Public School District, is a 3-acre green space that was reclaimed from former industrial uses and opened in late summer 2017. This brownfield has an outdoor classroom and had many partners including the Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy, Dow Corning Foundation, the Alice E. Turner Memorial Trust, the Allen E. and Marie A. Nickless Memorial Foundation, the Wickson-Link Memorial Foundation, the William McNally Family Foundation, and the Jury Foundation. It is located at the corner of Genesee and Niagara Streets, downstream along the Saginaw River from Green Point. It is unclear how the outdoor classroom will relate to the Green Point Environmental Learning Center programmatically or in terms of influencing Green Point use or attendance.

City of Saginaw

<http://www.saginaw-mi.com/departments/publicservices/parksandfacilities/>

The City of Saginaw's website says, "Green Point is a cooperative project between the City of Saginaw and the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge. Green Point serves as the refuge's educational facility and consists of 76-acres of bottomland hardwood forest, wetland, field and riverine habitats. Even though Green Point lies within Saginaw's City limits, it is home to a variety of wildlife! Green Point has over 2.5 miles of trails for hiking and cross-country skiing. Please note that bicycles and pets are not allowed on the trails." There is no discussion about linkages to City of Saginaw trails and pedestrian access and it appears that the website does not include the 2014 addition to the site of the former Germania nor uses allowed there to date (e.g. bicycling) that are not allowed at the Learning Center.

The City of Saginaw 2016-20 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan reflects significant fiscal challenges and a strong interest in partnering with others to provide needed outdoor recreation opportunities, programming services and facility development and operations. Some of the key action goals of the plan are:

- Join, create or otherwise convene routine meetings of all those organizations, groups and stakeholders seeking to improve parks, recreation and open space and/or providing recreation services in the City
- Evaluate landscape of parks to enhance functionality, safety and appeal and reduce maintenance
- Pursue development of the Iron Belle Trail and connections to and from the riverfront and neighborhoods
- Work with partners to pursue improvements at regional and community parks that improve accessibility and promote more use
- Investigate recreation programming opportunities in partnership with others

This provides great opportunity for the FWS to partner with the City related to trails and environmental education programming, as well as improving accessibility to facilities and opportunities at the Green Point Environmental Learning Center and the surrounding property leased from the City.

The Saginaw Riverfront Trail

http://www.mlive.com/news/saginaw/index.ssf/2014/09/plans_for_saginaw_riverfront_t.html

per the 2013 conceptual map from Spicer Group shows the trail at its closest point on the west side of the Saginaw River at the Rust Street Bridge and then proceeding downstream (East) toward downtown Saginaw. There are no connections shown going west toward Green Point on the map on the same side of the River as Green Point. However, this is where Saginaw County, if they execute a lease with the State of Michigan for the Malleable property has discussed taking the trail to the west all the way to the Saginaw Valley Rail Trail on Center in Saginaw Township, which would likely include Green Point if the Service is amenable.

Shiawassee River Water Trail Plan 2017

<https://www.shiawassee-water-trail.org/>

Developed by the Shiawassee River Water Trail Coalition in 2017, the trail is from Holly to Chesaning with a further downstream emergency stop at Gary Road. It does not extend into the Shiawassee River State Game Area or further downstream to the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge including not to the Green Point area. The trail plan makes no mention of potential future connections to the refuge in general or the Green Point area in particular.

Tittabawassee River Water Trail Plan

There is no Tittabawassee River Watershed Council or River Water Trail Plan. This is a rather complicated situation as DowDuPont, the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the EPA continue to work toward remediation of sites contaminated by dioxin. These large forces along with on-going litigation will likely heavily influence river use and access in the near future. Possibilities such as development of a lower Tittabawassee River Trail from below Midland downstream to the Green Point area and the beginning of the Saginaw River are likely to remain just that in the short term.

Cass River Water Trail Plan

<http://www.cassriver.org/partners.html>

The Cass River Water Trail runs 27.2 miles from Vassar to the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge. The most downstream public access point is the water access site on the NW side of M13 in Spaulding Township operated by the Service. There is no mention of Green Point or any water based connection to Green Point in the Water Trail Plan map. There is not a published version of the plan, only the water trail map at this time. The Service is listed as a partner of the Cass River Greenway.

Flint River Water Trail Plan

<http://flinriver.org/blog/>

The Flint River Water Trail goes from Southern Lapeer County and ends in Montrose. This does not reach the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge or provide a water link to Green Point. There is no water trail plan at this time, rather a water trail map and an interest in developing a water trail plan by the Flint River Watershed Coalition.

Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy

<http://www.sblc-mi.org/saginaw-county.html>

http://www.sblc-mi.org/uploads/1/1/0/5/11050970/sblc_strategic_plan_6-11-14.pdf

The Strategic Plan for the Conservancy (2014) does not mention Green Point, the Green Point Environmental Learning Center or connections to it. It does mention institutional partnerships with state and federal NR managing agencies including the FWS, but does not discuss any specific actions related to Green Point. The Conservancy birding website notes the Green Point Environmental Learning Center as part of their birding tour, but not mentioning the other portions of the Green Point area. It seems likely it hasn't been updated since the 2014 acquisition of the Germania property.

Shiawassee River State Game Area Master Plan 2017

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dnr/shiawassee_river_sga_mp_552879_7.pdf

The 2017 SRSGA Master Plan mentions the waterfowl refuge status of the SNWR and its flood plain habitat, moist soil units and lack of agricultural lands, but does not refer to environmental education or Green Point area including the Environmental Learning Center. Green Point physically far removed from SGA boundaries, unlike other portions of the SNWR.

Gateway Community Livability Leaders Forum Action Plan for Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge, Saginaw, Michigan and Surrounding Communities 2014

https://www.conservationfund.org/images/cln_events-resources/2014-15_Livability_Project/Shiawassee_Gateway_Communities_Livability_Assessment_Recommendations_Report.pdf

The Conservation Fund, using a grant from the Federal Livability Initiative engaged the greater Saginaw community in process designed to improve community livability. A total of 50 people are listed as being involved in the process. Their key recommendations published in 2015 were:

- Raise awareness of the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge and surrounding rivers as an environmental and economic asset. They noted the importance of the SNWR including Green Point, area rivers and parks as the foundation for active and healthy lifestyles that attract residents as well as develop a sustainable tourism and natural resource based economic sector.
- Take a regional approach by continuing and expanding collaboration among governmental and private entities.
- Developing safe, convenient access between natural resources, including the rivers, downtowns and neighborhoods. These resources are now a great potential asset to improve the quality of life in the region. A key action is to identify and develop safe and convenient ways to access natural areas and use the rivers across the region.
- Invest in existing infrastructure and downtowns to meet the current and future needs of residents, workers, and visitors in a way that develops community character as well as a sense of place.
- Make improving the quality of life for residents a priority. Community planning and development should focus on improving the quality of life for residents by identifying priorities that will support livability improvements in transportation, employment, housing, education. Further this should help to meet the day-to-day needs of residents and enhance the community's attractiveness for outsiders.

In particular, they suggest biking/walking facilities in and around the Germania/Green Point in partnership with adjacent neighborhoods, local government, etc. They also advocate for engaging with public health organizations to align their priorities toward recreation development that promotes healthy lifestyles for many such as walking, running, bicycling, etc.

In terms of youth the Assessment proposed greater linkages of public lands, neighborhoods and outdoor education and recreation. They also advocate for place based learning (e.g. at Green Point about flood plain forest ecology). Finally, they advocate for opportunities for youth to show leadership, public service and explore careers through involvement in service projects related to public lands (e.g. Green Point/Germania). The SEEDS program led by the Service at Green Point in 2017 is an excellent example of such a recommendation being implemented.

In terms of sustainable economic development, the GLLFAP proposed that the Refuge would acquire the Germania Clubhouse building as a refuge visitor center/community gathering location. This did not happen as it was sold to Saginaw County Mental Health. They also suggested that the existing cart path network, especially on the east end of the Germania remain to be a viable, universal access pathway for visitors and recreational use.

Stakeholder Conversations

The author has held a number of conversations with key stakeholder regarding Green Point. Of these stakeholders, only one, Autumn Mitchell, was represented at the public meetings in September 2017. It is notable that both Saginaw Bay WIN and the Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy actively distributed the September public meeting notices/FWS press releases to their broad email list serves. Summaries of these conversations are noted below.

Brian Keenan-Lechel – Saginaw County Parks Director

Brian noted that Saginaw County operates its parks primarily on a voter approved parks millage of 0.28 mills which generates approximately \$1.3 million annually. This is slightly supplemented by fees and charges for certain services providing a total budget of around \$1.5 million. This millage will be up for renewal in 2020.

Looking forward the County is likely to be leasing the Malleable property, currently owned by the Racer Trust and likely to soon be acquired by the State of Michigan DNR per two Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grants provided it passes environmental muster in an upcoming environmental review to occur during spring, summer and early fall of 2018. This will evaluate both work to remove industrial leftovers and contaminants as well as encapsulate other such material done by Racer Trust in the past couple of years. If all goes well it is hoped that the property will be leased for 30 years by the County from the DNR in the late fall of 2018.

Brian is supportive of a trail link from the Malleable property (which goes east to Rust Street) to the Saginaw Valley Rail Trail that involves Green Point in some way. There is no single specific route and looks forward to a cooperative relationship with the FWS regarding a trail link through Green Point. In the development plans for the Malleable site, it appears that one possible trail link to Green Point may come in at the far eastern end of Gabriel Street which connects to the planned trail/existing road network within the Malleable site. This would then provide the Service with many potential avenues regarding a trail link or links through the Green Point area.

Brian also noted that Saginaw County Parks has purchased a Project Recreation mobile vehicle to bring recreation programming focused on healthy activity and fun to many locations in the county including it the City of Saginaw. He is very interested in programming opportunities at Green Point in cooperation with the FWS and would also be willing to provide a program with FWS permission not using any additional support at Green Point. He/Saginaw County Parks is interested in developing a stronger cooperative relationship with the FWS and the site at Green Point.

Mike Kelly- The Conservation Fund/Saginaw Bay WIN/Saginaw Children's Zoo Board

Overall, Mike feels that Green Point and the rest of the SNWR seem separate from one another by geography, neighborhood and management focused on wildlife compared to people. This is not a bad thing, but provides the Service an opportunity at Green Point to better connect with people, especially urban residents as it doesn't require a car to visit and it is within the City of Saginaw.

He sees access to nature, environmental education and opportunities for outdoor recreation that promote healthy lifestyles and bring community members together as especially important

opportunities for Green Point. This includes opportunities for bicycling and walking on trails, fishing and paddling, not fencing the public out and inviting their visitation. He sees Green Point as a gateway or stepping stone to creating not only visitors, but also supporters of conservation and the Service as well as promoting understanding of the natural world and the enjoyment of wildlife. In practical terms, Green Point should add value to the Southwest Saginaw neighborhood as a community asset. Since Green Point is not on a major thoroughfare, it is vital that it is increasingly seen also as a destination, rather than just a local facility.

He is very supportive of a hike/bike trail that would pass through Green Point connecting the Riverfront Trail (Rust Street) to the Saginaw Valley Rail Trail (Center Road). He likens this to the new Zilwaukee to Bay City trail that passes through Crow Island West State Game Area (SGA). He has received MANY comments (per Saginaw Bay WIN's role in its planning and development) from users of that trail about their "discovery" of the SGA and their growing interest in wildlife, conservation and wildlife associated recreation. He believes a well maintained trail through Green Point could have a similar positive impact. It would also be a great venue for environmental education/interpretive signage illustrating various habitats, wildlife, environmental restoration activities, mission of the FWS, etc. He believes that achieving this status will take a combination of better marketing, more partnerships, improved maintenance, programmatic links to schools and other community institutions, etc.

He is also very supportive of river access for the purpose of paddling non-motorized craft (e.g. canoe, kayak) on the Green Point area. Our conversation discussed the potential value of the former interurban line to go directly to the river and would provide a manageable way to access the river, be able to be gated when access is not appropriate and would be vital to provide accessible paddling opportunities. We also discussed whether there was a positive connection to be made between the long and narrow golf course pond that goes N/S almost all the way to the river and whether a connection between the pond and the river would provide a unique paddling opportunity as well as creating a shallow water habitat that would attract fish, amphibians, raptors, fur bearing animals, etc. providing excellent viewing, especially from a kayak.

Regarding environmental education, he is very supportive but sensed that current programming is not well known in the community. He noted the value of engaging both young people and their parents/other key adults in their life through programs, school related projects, events, etc. He particularly mentioned the benefit of stronger links to the Saginaw Arts and Sciences Academy (SASA), a Saginaw Public Schools magnet school. He also encouraged greater cooperation with the Saginaw Children's Zoo, which is increasingly focused on conservation and less on the display of animals. In particular, he encouraged greater contact, coordination and cooperation with Robin Carey, their environmental educator. This could include activities that would directly tie Green Point to the Zoo related to the rivers, area wildlife, climate, etc. The point is many opportunities for cooperation that could be grown and cultivated to better meet both organizations' missions (Zoo and FWS).

In summary, effective use of the unique status of Green Point based on its urban location, many neighbors, opportunity to easily invite appropriate visitation and access to resources can strengthen an overall interest in wildlife, wildlife associated recreation and conservation.

Trevor Edmonds – Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy

Trevor views Green Point as an opportunity for the FWS to welcome new people to the conservation community through learning, outdoor recreation and an appreciation for wildlife habitat in large and small quantities. He noted the significant opportunity to substantially increase pollinator habitat at Green Point through the establishment of substantial warm season grasses/prairie flowering plants adjacent to the northern boundary of Green Point, presenting an aesthetically pleasing perspective, providing vital habitat for pollinators and limiting neighbor concerns about tall and tangled forest vegetation concealing illegal activity/behavior near homes. He noted this may be especially useful for those interested in nature photography who live in urban areas and may have relatively few options for taking pictures of natural settings.

He sees great value in portions of Green Point becoming a demonstration site for urban habitat options that involve the FWS Partners program (he mentioned Michelle Vander Haar specifically), the Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy and many other potential partners in government as well as the non-profit sector. He specifically noted how this could easily also incorporate programs for urban landowners to better understand the practical steps in establishing and maintaining important habitat plots on their property to benefit species such as Monarch butterflies, honey bees, etc. He also sees this as a way to better link the Partners program to local schools that often have land suitable for habitat, but instead just opt to mow the grass. Seeing what grasslands/prairies look like, being able to learn about their establishment, management and value and linking teachers, parents and administrators with Michelle and other FWS staff could grow interest in habitat, wildlife and conservation as a whole.

He also expressed support for a trail link between the Riverfront Trail and the Saginaw Valley Rail Trail running through Green Point and expressed hope it would be similar to the positive impact he believes the Zilwaukee to Bay City trail has had on birding. Finally, he noted his support for paddling opportunities at Green Point, noting the launches both upstream (Boers III at Center Road) and downstream Rust Street, are clearly focused on trailered, powered watercraft.

Autumn Mitchell – Flint River Watershed Coalition/Friends of SNWR

Autumn noted the regional importance of the Refuge and especially Green Point where many of the major rivers of the Saginaw Bay watershed come together and form the Saginaw River. Her perspective is also influenced she noted by having worked for the Refuge at Green Point and seeing some of the specific challenges with the interpretive/environmental education functions.

One clear challenge she noted was the inadequacy of the current building to meet community needs such as a meeting site for community, conservation or environmental groups. The site is most youth oriented and not especially welcoming of any significant gathering due to space and parking constraints as well as a relatively inefficient building in terms of energy conservation. She envisions a more substantial community oriented facility near Maple Street in the north east quadrant of the Green Point property that would provide sufficient parking, be energy efficient and able to demonstrate energy conservation to others, provide easy access to the largest pond to facilitate educational efforts regarding water and water quality and be visible to those who are new to Green Point so they see they are welcome and there are support facilities.

Besides educational and community facility upgrades, she is very supportive of habitat demonstration sites (e.g. native prairie) to show landowners, schools and others on how to provide valuable wildlife habitat on their land, whether it be a large or small parcel. She notes however, that to most effectively do this Green Point needs MUCH more consistent staffing with interpretive professionals, better maintenance and a real investment in making it a destination for learning, outdoor recreation and conservation. She noted that much of the time the Green Point Environmental Learning Center is closed or understaffed. There is also a lack of personnel to do the maintenance necessary to welcome significant additional visitation to Green Point.

In regards to a trail through Green Point, Autumn is supportive of a hike/bike trail that connects the Riverfront Trail with the Saginaw Valley Rail Trail. However, she notes that she would like the trail within Green Point to show all the habitat types in the area including the riverfront. This may be best accomplished by using portions of Maple Street or a parallel side trail and the old interurban line that goes to the river as a portion of the trail system as well as existing portions of the cart path system. The point is that the trail wouldn't just skirt the north side of Green Point, but get all the way to the river to make it less of a pass through and more of a destination. She also supports developing paddling opportunities along the river.

She is also very supportive of establishing stronger links with K-12 schools in the area, especially those in the City of Saginaw where Green Point is located. Again, she noted this will take a long term investment in people, not just infrastructure to grow and then sustain such programming.

Jason Hill – Ducks Unlimited MI Conservation Manager

Jason and DU are most focused and interested in opportunities to restore or enhance habitat. The actual donation of the Germania property by The Nature Conservancy to the FWS was part of the match for the current Phase IV Saginaw Bay – Lake Erie North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) successful grant proposal by Ducks Unlimited that is currently in force. The grant proposal in describing this property noted the presence of trails and opportunities for environmental education as well as the goal of restoring both palustrine and forested wetlands as well as native prairie/pollinators on the site. Because this property was used as match he suggested that future actions by the Service may want to be checked with NAWCA managers to be sure to maintain the integrity of the property donated by The Nature Conservancy.

One area where Jason was curious was the opportunity to create oxbow habitat off the main stem of the Tittabawassee River by linking the river to the long narrow N/S pond with some type of culvert/water control structure that would allow the natural ebb and flow of the river to flood and dry the pond (as it already does during many flood events). This would be a site where eagles and ospreys may be likely to find fish for food in relatively shallow, clearer water giving residents and visitors an opportunity to see these raptors actively hunting common prey. This would also be good habitat for waterfowl, furbearing animals, amphibians, reptiles, wading birds and shorebirds.

Ric Russell - President Southwest Saginaw Neighborhood Association (SWSNA)

Ric is passionate about the value of Green Point to the community as encompassed by the 2,275 parcels of land as well as the other community institutions, transportation network, etc. within the SWSN. This neighborhood is bounded by Gratiot at the Saginaw City limits going east to the Saginaw River then along the west side of the river all the way to Superior Street and then back north to Gratiot at the point of beginning. It includes some communities with unique needs such as part of Westchester Village Senior Housing and the closest public school to Green Point, Merrill Elementary. It is the largest neighborhood association in Saginaw in terms of area and population.

When asked about important needs related to outdoor recreation, Green Point and related issues, Ric noted a number. One was to maintain the integrity of Maple Street and Gabriel Street. Vehicles are regularly leaving these streets and parking on the Green Point property or driving across it. Since there is no curb and gutter on the streets, this results in deep ruts on the Green Point property but little to no damage to cars, trucks and ORVs whose drivers exhibit this behavior. Ric mows the borders of the streets as well as the border of the major cart path to the largest, deepest pond to the east of Maple Street. He has suffered damage to the SWSNA mowing equipment due to these deep ruts. He would like to have some sort of barrier to deter vehicle access the Green Point property and more reasonable parking options for visitors to Green Point other than the one lot by the Environmental Learning Center. This may include parking to allow easier access to the cart paths and to the large pond east of Maple. A barrier may include large rocks (low maintenance, natural) rather than a fence. He was surprised when Maple Street and part of Gabriel were upgraded why curb and gutter was not put in place.

Ric noted that there is use of the cart paths by groups of disabled residents of Westchester Village during the snow free months at least a couple of times a year. He also notes that a number of people in the SWSNA are disabled and that it is important that they are able to enjoy the Green Point area. He believes some asphalt pathways need to be identified and maintained for walkers, bicyclists and those in adaptive devices that provide individual mobility (e.g. Amigo, etc.).

Ric is positive about better limiting access to the old interurban line/road to the river from Maple Street. He noted that there had been considerable illegal drug activity at the road end at the river when people were able to drive to the site. He has had useful positive assistance from the Saginaw Community Police officer as well as the new Refuge officer in reducing this problem. Conversely, he noted that interurban line could be a useful access route, if appropriately managed, for educational programs that would include access for school groups and the disabled to the river's shoreline.

Overall, Ric's greatest concern is that the Green Point area is an asset that is accessible to residents in the SWSNA and helps meet their outdoor recreation. He also is supportive of FWS management actions that will enhance the security of neighbors of the Green Point area including providing visual security, control of feral dogs and access to the area beyond the designated road network by cars/trucks, snowmobiles and off-road vehicles. With over 2,775 distinct parcels of land in the SWSNA, Green Point is an important asset of the largest neighborhood association in Saginaw. It needs to be distinct and positive however, from the existing 516 vacant lots within

the SWSNA area. Through partnership and cooperation, Ric believes that positive distinction is happening, but more needs to be done.

Refuge Staff (Shaun, David, Eric, Michelle, Lelaina, Lionel)

Refuge staff is excited over the opportunities available at Green Point, but also wary that it means additional commitment for already scarce operations and personnel resources with no clear increase of either personnel or operations funding promised. They noted that the consent decree is to offset environmental damage and does not provide substantial funding for outdoor recreation facilities, programming or maintenance of such.

It is also noted that expertise to make decisions at Green Point often resides in the FWS outside of Refuge staff. For example, the influence of dioxin contamination, the impacts of moving dirt on Green Point and whether options such as any type of gardening are possible reside with the East Lansing Ecological Services office (e.g. Lisa Williams, Clark McCreedy, etc) than at the Refuge. This is important when considering connecting the long pond on the West side to the river or in considering the future of the greenhouse at Green Point. One idea for the greenhouse is to focus on native plant propagation rather than garden food plants. The native plants could then be used to help restore the Green Point area.

Concerning the overall ecological restoration of Green Point, the staff wants to focus the most human use/facility development East of Maple Street or directly West adjacent to Maple Street (e.g. parking area just West on the North border of the property). One interesting idea was to improve fish habitat in the largest pond East of Maple Street by creating structure with natural materials (e.g. sunken brush, etc.) since the pond is lacks large wood or other habitat structure. This could be linked to any future development of a fishing pier/platform both as a fish attractant and also as a way to provide escape cover for juvenile fish to support self-sustaining native fish populations.

Another area of outreach staff was interested in was an outreach program to veterans. They hope to develop such a program with the Veteran's Administration Outreach Coordinator in Saginaw connected to the VA hospital. This brings up an issue of staffing however, as programming is people intensive. This includes even if programs are led or at least partially staffed by volunteers. There is coordination, supervision, marketing, etc. needed to insure a successful program and that involves Refuge staff to some extent.

The idea of a demonstration site for landowners to view wildlife/environmentally friendly practices in an urban area was interesting to staff, but there was concern that they are stretched now to meet commitments through the Partners for Fish and Wildlife program. This may be a relatively small area on the northern edge of the Green Point area East of Maple Street that would be readily accessible and provide interpretive signage and information as well as contact information for potential landowner partners to follow up if interested.

Staff noted that all facilities at Green Point, whether legacy facilities from the Learning Center or new ones, need to be accessible per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This would include many of the trails, fishing opportunities, kayak launch, etc. For example, they noted that a paved loop on the west side of Maple would provide an accessible way to explore the

ecological restoration of Green Point while leaving most of the area and other trails more natural. However, developing such trail resources takes money, maintenance (e.g. keeping trees away from the trail so roots don't damage the surface), interpretive signage, etc. They note that some trails are often flooded and perhaps should be abandoned if they are regularly inundated by floodwaters.

Other key topics of discussion included creating an inviting gateway for Green Point at the corner of Maple and Michigan. This could be enhanced by external way finding along Michigan Avenue or even off state highways such as M46 or even I75. All these information and aesthetic improvements would welcome visitors and set the tone for the "Green Point experience". They were also interested in the possibilities of a more formal positive relationship with Saginaw County Mental Health regarding parking during off-hours for that facility. Finally, they were interested about joint events with the City of Saginaw where Green Point could be a vital asset to a program such as International Migratory Bird Day.

Summary

Overall, in plans related to outdoor recreation and particularly land and water based trails there is little discussion of connectivity to Green Point with the exception of the Livability report from the Conservation Fund. One reason this is possibly the case is that many plans have not been updated since Green Point was acquired by the Service. Another is that since non-motorized trail use that is not wildlife related has not a focus of the FWS, many entities may not see Green Point area as a likely link in a trail system or a land or water trail destination. For example, the City of Saginaw notes that bicycles are not allowed at the Green Point Environmental Learning Center, but doesn't recognize that the Green Point area now has locations where there is bicycle use.

The stakeholder conversations provided more detailed and greater visions of Green Point that include investment in facilities, programs and staffing for the long term. The use of the property as NAWCA match also needs to be understood and factored into future plans. All stakeholders clearly point to the need to further develop partnerships, build on the opportunities Green Point provides and strengthen and develop the image of Green Point as a conservation, environmental education and outdoor recreation destination. Refuge staff is concerned however, that each opportunity provided has an operational impact where funding, personnel and policy needs to be similarly upgraded or staff will be overwhelmed.

One approach the Service may want to consider is to directly engage with such stakeholders who have developed outdoor recreation plans or have had in the past including Saginaw County Parks, Saginaw Township Parks, the City of Saginaw, the Cass River Greenway, the Shiawassee River Water Trail Coalition, Flint River Watershed Coalition, etc. to clearly ascertain their interest in connections and also to inform those potential land and water trail partners of the agency's approach to trails going forward at Green Point.

It will be useful to continue such a relationship after the public has expressed their preferences through the registered voter survey on both the community's and the Service's ideas regarding Green Point, rather than before such preferences are assessed. While the community meetings

clearly indicated interest in trail connections and trail use within Green Point, the meetings are not as representative of the community as the registered voter sample will be.

Based on the plans reviewed and contact with Saginaw County Parks, it appears the Malleable lease from the State of Michigan by the County may be the key factor to precipitate further action and interest in trails and other partnerships that involve not only Saginaw County, but also the City of Saginaw, the Michigan DNR and other entities.

Regarding water trails again little connectivity is noted to Green Point. While the Tittabawassee River receives heavy seasonal use related to fishing by motorized craft primarily accessing the river from the two nearby launches, the Rust Street launch and the Boers III launch on Center Road. Currently Green Point has no watercraft access for any visitor hoping to launch a watercraft from Green Point into the river or to stop at Green Point with a canoe, kayak or power boat and access facilities one would associate with a river stop such as bathrooms, drinking water, trash disposal facilities, etc.

Appendix C – Green Point Area Community Needs Assessment Progress Report and Summary of Public Meeting Process and Input

by

Charles M. Nelson, Associate Professor
Department of Community Sustainability
480 Wilson Road
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824
March 30, 2018

INTRODUCTION

The Nature Conservancy, with support from the Dow Chemical Company, purchased the former 135 acre Germania Town and Country Club, which closed its doors in 2010. The transfer to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) in 2014 added the property to the existing FWS Green Point Environmental Learning Center and the 80 acres on which it is located and made it a part of the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge. In total, the Green Point Area provides a substantial area within the City of Saginaw for environmental restoration, conservation, wildlife habitat, outdoor recreation and environmental learning.

The Green Point Area Restoration Project Community Needs Assessment is designed to engage the community in the Saginaw, Michigan area about their needs in the restoration and development of the Green Point Area. The goal is that in 2019 the FWS and the community have a shared vision of restoration and development activities that will meet both community needs related to the property that include outdoor recreation opportunities that are compatible with refuge purposes and ecological restoration goals of the FWS. It is being done through a cooperative agreement with Michigan State University under the direction of Dr. Chuck Nelson.

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT PHASES

Background

The community needs assessment is being done in three phases. The first phase started with background research of existing local, state and federal plans related to outdoor recreation, parks and open space, trails and similar subjects in the Saginaw area. This suggested that few local park, trail and community entities have significantly integrated the Green Point Area into their plans but interest is growing. In particular, Saginaw County Parks and Recreation is in the process of leasing the Malleable site just downstream from Green Point from the State of Michigan for park purposes. The county is interested in non-motorized trail connections with the Green Point Area. There is also potential for water trail plans to connect to Green Point but there are no formal plans or initiatives to do this at the current time for the Shiawassee or Cass Rivers. There is no current water trail plan for the lower Tittabawassee River. The situation is dynamic and plans will continue evolve as parks, facilities and land and water based trails are developed and modified for outdoor recreation throughout the area and during the course of this assessment.

Public Meetings

The second phase involved a series of three widely publicized initial community meetings that were held in the Saginaw area during September 2017. Meetings were scheduled to be available to the public in barrier free/ADA accessible public facilities both during the work day and in the evening on week days. They were publicized by an official press release from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (see Appendix A for release regarding 9/13/17 meetings) that was distributed to widely through the listserv of many community and regional organizations. These include the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge, the Southwest Saginaw Neighborhood Association, the Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy, the Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative Network and the Friends of Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge. This reached print and electronic media, thousands of citizens, neighbors of the Green Point Area (SW Saginaw Neighborhood Association represents citizens residing within approximately a half mile of the Green Point Area), local units of government and those who have expressed an interest to the Fish and Wildlife Service or the Friends of Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge regarding the Green Point Area.

The three meetings held in 2017 were:

- Green Point Environmental Learning Center, 3010 Maple St., Saginaw 2-4PM, September 13
- Green Point Environmental Learning Center, 3010 Maple St., Saginaw 6-8PM, September 13
- Spaulding Township Hall, 5825 Cole Rd., Saginaw 6-8PM, September 18

The meetings examined the public's perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the Green Point area in its current condition, opportunities for site renovation and restoration, programming and management to better meet community needs for outdoor recreation and other interests and the challenges of bringing those opportunities to fruition. They were facilitated by Dr. Nelson with the purpose of generating a wide ranging list of opportunities for public consideration in Phase III of the community needs assessment process through a representative registered voter survey concerning the future of Green Point.

The meetings were attended by 25 members of the public and included representatives from the Ezekiel Project, Friends of the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge, the Office of US Senator Gary Peters, the Southwest Saginaw Neighborhood Association and the Saginaw Field and Stream Club. Principal home zip codes reported by members of the public who attended a meeting were: 48417, 48601, 48602, 48603, 48607, 48609, 48626, 48638 and 48706 per the meeting signup sheet (Appendix B). All attendees who provided an email or a regular mail addresses were invited to request a copy of the public input provided at each meeting which was duly sent as requested by Dr. Nelson.

The meetings were also attended by 5 employees of the FWS. Those employees provided a useful history of Green Point, the ecological restoration process and served as a resource to answer technical questions from the public. In addition to verbal input, citizens had the alternative to provide written comment on a readily available form at each meeting (Appendix C).

All citizen input received at the meetings is provided in Appendix D. While written input forms were available at each meeting, no citizens availed themselves of the opportunity, but rather provided input verbally. Every attendee at each meeting provided some verbal input.

Survey

Third, following these public meetings, the mail survey and cover letter for the registered voter survey were developed and submitted by Dr. Nelson to the FWS on September 28, 2017. The instrument is to be sent to a representative sample of 1,500 Saginaw County registered voters. After extensive review and interaction with Refuge and regional FWS personnel, a revised survey instrument and cover letter were approved by the FWS in late February 2018 and sent for additional required review by federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB). It is uncertain when OMB review will be completed and the questionnaire will be able to be printed and distributed to the sample of registered voters. The specific Green Point management alternatives summarized in the questionnaire directly resulting from the citizen comments fully reported in Appendix D at the three public meetings are below in the bulleted list. Each has been reviewed by the Refuge staff to be legally appropriate and feasible to accomplish. Survey responses will gauge public preferences about them as well as some additional issues related to Green Point on which Refuge staff seeks public input as part of the survey.

Citizen Generated Alternatives for the Green Point Area from 9/13/17 and 9/18/17 meetings in the registered voter questionnaire as they are listed in the questionnaire:

- Link the Green Point Area to public non-motorized trails in the Saginaw area
- Develop a non-motorized trail system at the Green Point Area accessible the disabled
- Provide facilities accessible to those with disabilities in Green Point Area including benches and rest rooms
- Offer additional public education and information programs and activities about the Green Point Area
- Install live internet camera to show unique wildlife activity at the Green Point Area

- Enhance public transportation opportunities to the Green Point Area
- Better communicate with the public about programs, initiatives, volunteer opportunities and habitat projects in the Green Point Area
- Limit tall vegetation/trees in the Green Point Area near homes in favor of shorter grasses and wildflowers
- Renovate the existing Green Point Environmental Learning Center with improved teaching technology, energy efficiencies and more capacity to host visitors
- Provide enhanced fishing opportunities within the Green Point Area
- Provide trail access to the Tittabawassee River, including for those with disabilities
- Provide opportunities for community service at the Green Point Area through habitat restoration and other projects
- Strengthen links between the Green Point Area and local K-12 schools to promote scientific learning

Once the survey instrument and cover letter receives final federal approval, a sample of registered voters will be drawn with the assistance of the Saginaw County Clerk and the survey and cover letter will be printed and the study administered by MSU. The results of the survey will then be analyzed by MSU and presented in 2019 to the FWS who will determine how to appropriately convey the information to the public. This process will provide the FWS substantial and effective community input, benefiting from known and active stakeholders as well as clearly recognizing that the Green Point Area and its future are an asset of all citizens.

Community Public Meeting Announcement for September 13, 2017 Meetings

Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge
6975 Mower Road, Saginaw MI 48601
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 10, 2017

Contact: Pamela Repp, Refuge Manager, 989-777-5930, shiawassee@fws.gov
Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge
6975 Mower Road, Saginaw MI 48601

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) invites you to attend one of two community meetings at the Green Point Environmental Learning Center, 3010 Maple Street, Saginaw, Michigan on Wednesday, September 13, 2017. At these meetings we will discuss the future use and restoration of the former Germania Country Club that has recently become part of the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge. The public is invited to provide input about their needs for wildlife, outdoor recreation and environmental education as well as any concerns they may have regarding the future management of this area.

The meetings will be from 2-4PM and 6-8PM and will be facilitated by Dr. Chuck Nelson from Michigan State University's Department of Community Sustainability. They will include a brief overview of how the property came to the FWS as a former golf course, legal purposes of national wildlife refuges and the current status of environmental and habitat restoration. The

majority of the meeting will be to listen to the public regarding their interests in the site, focusing on both opportunities and concerns. This input will inform the short and long term restoration and management of the site by the FWS. Light refreshments will be provided and all are welcome. If you are unable to attend one of these meetings, two future meetings are being planned in the Saginaw area and will receive similar notice.

For further information, please contact Pamela Repp, Refuge Manager, or Lelaina Muth, Deputy Manager, at (989) 777-5930 or you may go to our website to obtain more information: <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/Shiawassee/>.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is committed to providing access to these meetings for all participants. Please direct all requests for sign language interpreting services or other accommodation needs to Lelaina Muth at shiawassee@fws.gov. If you need alternative formats or services because of a disability or have any questions concerning a reasonable accommodation, please contact Lelaina Muth at 989-777-5930, TTY 800-877-8339 with your request by close of business September 1, 2017.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit <http://www.fws.gov>.

Connect with our Facebook page at [facebook.com/usfwsmidwest](https://www.facebook.com/usfwsmidwest), follow our tweets at twitter.com/usfwsmidwest, watch our YouTube Channel at [youtube.com/usfws](https://www.youtube.com/usfws) and download photos from our Flickr page at [flickr.com/photos/usfwsmidwest](https://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwsmidwest).

Community Meeting Sign-In Sheet (following info requested of participants)

First/Last Name Email and Street Address City and Zip Code Check If You Want
Follow Up/ Meeting Minutes

Written Input Form for Community Meetings (following info requested)

Comment Form: Green Point/Germania Community Needs Assessment at the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge

- Strengths of Site
- Weaknesses of Site
- Suggested Opportunities/Improvements for the Site
- Threats to Suggested Opportunities/Improvements for the Site

Comment from:

_____	_____	_____	Yes or No
First/Last Name	Email or Street Address	City and Zipcode	Want Follow
			Up/Meeting Minutes?

To have written comments included in meeting minutes beyond those orally provided, hand to Dr. Nelson at the meeting or mail within 1 week. mail. Your name will not be attributed to any specific comment, just as with comments recorded during the meeting.
Dr. Chuck Nelson, 480 Wilson Road, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824.

To provide input about the Refuge beyond the scope of the Green Point/Germania needs assessment contact: Lelaina Muth, Deputy Refuge Manager, 6975 Mower Road, Saginaw, MI 48601 or by phone at (989) 607-6056.

Community Meeting Minutes from the Three Community Meetings

Green Point/Germania Community Needs Assessment Meeting Minutes Green Point Environmental Learning Center, 2-4PM, September 13, 2017 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats Analysis Facilitated/Compiled by Dr. Chuck Nelson, Michigan State University

Strengths

- Trails
- Green Point/Germania in our backyard
 - Don't need a car
 - Paved trails/cart paths accessible to many including those with mobility impairments
- Lots of river frontage
- Lots of wildlife
 - Deer, cranes, egrets, eagle, coyotes, etc.
- Wildflowers/prairie
- Green Point Environmental Learning Center (GPELC) educational opportunities
- No charge to enter/use
- Lots of choice in activities and trails
- Peaceful
- Fishing
- Lots of potential for future winter activities such as cross country skiing, snowshoeing, etc.

Weaknesses

- Lack of native vegetation
- Abundance of invasive vegetation
- Illegal motorized use of the area by automobiles, all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles
- Contaminants like dioxin
- Large area to maintain with significant costs
- Lack of security
- Cart paths deteriorating in multiple locations
- GPELC not well known, even in the neighborhood
 - Lack of information about existence, boundaries, recreational opportunities and programs
- Underutilized
- Possible conflicts between the FWS mission and community interests
- Mosquitos

Opportunities

- Provide more educational opportunities at GPELC

- Provide more outreach programs from GPELC going out to schools
 - Focus on younger students with these programs
- Develop community service projects/opportunities at GPELC for high school students
- Need to reach out to seniors more effectively
 - Use trail system to promote bike, hike, etc.
 - Work with OLLI (Osher Lifelong Learning Institute)
- Use connection of Racer property (now managed by Saginaw County) to Green Point to for trails and other linkages
 - Consult Saginaw Futures, Great Lakes Bay Regional Trail plans/maps
- Develop mountain bike trail in 80-acre floodplain forest that is part of original GPELC site
- Interest in white pine trees being re-established
- Provide public transit access to GPELC and consider tours (e.g. Green Point, Auto Tour Rt., etc.)
 - Boat/water tours a possibility too
- Expand fishing opportunity
- Maintain/renovate cart paths maintained for non-motorized trail use
 - May need to ID key ones as funding limited to both renovate and maintain
- Work to limit motorized use of Maple St. bike path on the east side of Maple Street to promote non-motorized use, public safety
- Increase community involvement with GPELC
- Recruit more volunteers to do infrastructure projects at GPELC area
- Use existing Germania infrastructure that is functional rather than removing it
- Develop more seating (e.g. benches) and provide trash receptacles at entire Green Point/Germania area
- Develop and target education programs to Green Point and adjacent Racer Tract/Park users
- Develop links with Saginaw County Mental Health to serve/work with the organization/clients
- Consider novel environmental/vegetation restorations with adjacent neighbors that meet neighbor and neighborhood security needs
 - Shorter pollinators, perennial prairie grasses, etc. along north border of former Germania to a clear vision area from neighboring houses, structures
- Embrace being an urban refuge with many potential visitors new to National Wildlife Refuge system and the outdoors

Threats/Challenges to Opportunities

- Need more effective communication
 - Among federal, state and local governmental units.
 - With neighborhood associations including umbrella neighborhood association in Saginaw
 - Other partners e.g. the conservation community (i.e. Saginaw Field & Stream, etc.)
 - Public radio (Delta College)

- Social media
- Long term contamination issues and uncertain cleanup actions, schedules, etc.
- Lack of funding for capital improvements and operations
- Lack of security as evidenced by vandalism
- Need to gain community agreement, buy-in
- Conflicts with the Fish and Wildlife Service mission, legal mandates and urban setting/situation
- Doing too much change too fast is unsettling in the community
- Lose credibility by doing nothing of substance
 - Need timeline for milestones of accomplishment linked to clear plan
- More effort to learn from successful nature centers/parks in the area
- Gaining permits to do construction and renovation in the flood plain
- Challenging to determine what fits with an urban refuge and mission keeping wildlife first
- Determining whether to keep some/all of existing cart path system as more efficient and effective than removing and partially replacing trail system

***Green Point/Germania Community Needs Assessment Public Meeting
Green Point Environmental Learning Center, 6-8PM, September 13, 2017
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats Analysis
Facilitated/Compiled by Dr. Chuck Nelson, Michigan State University***

Strengths

- Urban refuge that is near many people
- Education programs
- Safe
- Close to wildlife
- Trails accessible to many
- Accessible Green Point Environmental Learning Center (GPELC)
- GPELC serves multiple generations young to old
- Educational staff at GPELC
- Lots of Tittabawassee River frontage
- Fishing
- Positive public relations of GPELC with the community
- Historical significance of Green Point area/site
 - Original Riverside park (south of GPELC by river) served by former interurban line
 - Used to be many houseboats along the river used for recreation
 - Former flower shop scraped soil on the E border of Germania for potting soil
- Unique wildlife especially migratory birds
- Adjacent to new park land at the Racer Tract
- No hunting zone that provides watchable wildlife (e.g. deer) in the fall
- Good habitat during floods for land based mammals, waterfowl, etc.
 - Slight rises in elevation provide watchable wildlife during high water events

Weakness

- Cart path bridge over Long Pond on west end of former Germania closed due to safety issues.
- Lack of security
 - Illegal motorized use sometimes connected with drugs, dumping, etc.
- Physical separation of site from main Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge (SNWR) by river
- Contamination by dioxin and related compounds of soil, fish, etc.
- Cart paths are breaking down
- Lack of funding to GPELC, especially for maintenance
- Light pollution limits night/star viewing opportunities
- Lack of broad public recognition of existence and public opportunities at GPELC
- Unnatural water body of the Long Pond on west end of former Germania
- Poor linkage of Green Point area trails to non-motorized trail systems in the area
- Isolated parcel to west of Saginaw Mental Health parking lot not currently used

Opportunities

- Need to regularly chronicle/display on social media Green Point area restoration and programming
 - SEEDS crew accomplishments, programs, viewing and volunteer opportunities, etc.
- Need to grow community involvement linking individuals and organizations to GPELC
- Rethink the trail system
 - Different levels and types of uses for different trails
 - Better understand user needs, levels of flooding by area, purpose of trail
 - Consider using former interurban line as ADA accessible trail to river as firm base for long term sustainable trail is in place
 - Develop cost estimates for different trail scenarios/arrangements
- Work to have more local school use from the City of Saginaw and Saginaw Township
- Offer more seminars with appropriate facilities and programs at GPELC
- Need ADA access to trails and develop ADA restrooms besides those inside GPELC in Green Point area
- Need better promotion of GPELC using a banquet approach targeting “locovores” (local food advocates)
 - Potential opportunity for Friends of SNWR to host, raise \$ to support area
- Develop youth programs with Scouting and others having project based outcomes
- Improve signage
 - Boundaries, welcome, education, orientation
 - Messaging focusing on public being welcome in Green Point area
- Integrate education, restoration and community outreach efforts
 - Involve Saginaw Community Foundation Youth Service Program “Spring Into Service”

- Consider the center of 80-acre original Green Point property (flood plain forest) as the “heart” of the area to be as wild as possible/a sanctuary
 - Use live feed camera of unique wildlife situation (e.g. nesting bird, den, etc.) taking advantage of excellent wifi

Threats/Challenges to Opportunity

- Lack of funding for renovation and operations
- Bureaucratic pace of the federal government
- Sustainability beyond initial renovation takes money and staff as well as community involvement
- Contaminants and the level/pace of cleanup
 - What will happen in remediation process?
 - Need to understand levels of contamination as not uniform across the Green Point area

***Green Point/Germania Community Needs Assessment Meeting Minutes
Spaulding Township Hall, 6-8PM, September 18, 2017
Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities Threats Analysis
Facilitated/Compiled by Dr. Chuck Nelson, Michigan State University***

Strengths

- Accessibility
 - No access restrictions
- Close to the city
- Easy exposure to nature
- Bicycling opportunities linked to nature
- Fishing
- Wildflowers
- Scheduled programming that is free for family oriented events, school groups, etc.
- Drop-in programming
- Birding
- Historical areas such as former amusement park, archeological site related to Native Americans
- Access to river and ponds
- Biodiversity
- Observe seasonal changes with good photography opportunities
- Cole property within dedicated boundary of Green Point/Germania area will be acquired by The Nature Conservancy
- Connectivity to other natural areas as well as wildlife and surface waters
- Racer tract acquisition by MI DNR/Saginaw County
- Located near Merrill School easily accessible to students and teachers

Weaknesses

- Lack of parking
- Lack of ADA access to trail system
 - Some trail locations actually hazardous to all users, not just those with disabilities
- Lack of public transit to Green Point Environmental Learning Center (GPELC)
 - Closest bus stop is W Michigan/Maple St.
- Long pond (key shaped)
 - Stagnant and ditch like
- Mosquitos
 - Concern Long Pond is a mosquito breeding area
- Lack of programming hours at GPELC
 - Only open part time with minimal staffing
- Lack of visitor comfort facilities
- Restrooms, trash receptacles, benches
- Crime/Sense of security concerns
- GPELC outdated
 - Uninviting inside
 - Exhibits not interesting
 - Not relatable to community
 - Plumbing issues with drains
 - Lack interpretive messaging
 - Energy inefficient
 - Trails to “nowhere” on former cart paths
 - Low tech, poor wifi in the building
- Germania
 - Golf no longer there, but people still link site to golf course
- Lack of trail maps
- Bridge on Long Pond is dangerous
- No grooming for cross country skiing in winter
- Invasive plants (eg. Glossy buckthorn) impacting trail use
 - Lack of trail maintenance
 - Dead ash and elm trees are hazards
- Trails often wet/muddy/flooded in forested area south of GPELC, thus inaccessible
- Lack of interpretive signage on the entire Green Point/Germania area

Opportunities

- Provide ADA accessible trail system
- Develop and place appropriate interpretive signage
- Have well defined fishing access
- Develop a nature discovery area to provide free exploration opportunities for youth above ground
 - No digging

- Use logs, stumps, rocks
- Have a fire ring/amphitheater
- Provide opportunity along river to use/view river
 - Kayak, fish, land and water scenic viewing locations
- Consider interpreting succession through environmental education programs related to Green Point/Germania ecological restoration
- Provide for multi-seasonal trail uses
- Connect to trails in the area
 - Racer
 - Center St.
 - Other city trails
- Work with Saginaw County as a key trail partner
- Use Saginaw County Mental Health Building for large GPELC events when possible
 - Allow GPELC area parking at Saginaw County Mental Health (former Germania clubhouse location)
- Provide different types of trails for different uses such as bicycles, nature study, etc.
- Expand parking at GPELC and other sites at the Green Point/Germania area to accommodate more visitors, events, etc.
- Establish and expand partnerships with other organizations to provide more on-site programs
- Strengthen links to K-12 education
 - Use project based learning to meet educational goals for K-12 partners
 - Focus on STEM, ecological restoration, wildlife population studies, longitudinal studies
- Look at possibilities of raised bed agriculture to avoid contamination and promote local food production
- Establish and strengthen partnerships with Colleges, Universities and Michigan State University Extension
- Have a clear entrance sign welcoming the public to GPELC and the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge

Threats/Challenges to Opportunities

- Vandalism
- Fear of Crime/Personal safety concerns
- Lack of funding for maintenance and operations for existing and new facilities, ecological restoration, etc.
- Lack of \$\$ for programming staff at GPELC
- Flooding
- Federal political administration
 - Lack of funding
 - Negative policies regarding the environment at the national level
- Negative perception of federal government in general
- Lack of patrol

- Standard Fish and Wildlife Service boundary signs which say “Authorized use only” are not welcoming
- Perception of feral dogs threatening safety
- Perception that Green Point/Germania is in an unsafe area of Saginaw
- Don’t want this to be like Wickes Park which lacks maintenance, functional facilities
- Need to establish long term functioning partnerships across the community
 - Hard to do
 - Similar vision needed among partners

Appendix D – Mail Survey and First Mailing Cover Letter

OMB Control No. 0596-0236
Exp. 11/30/2020

**Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge’s
Green Point Area Community Needs Assessment
Saginaw Community Member Questionnaire**

1. Please check ✓ the one which best describes your household. For us, outdoor recreation is

Very important Moderately important Slightly important Unimportant

2. Please circle each outdoor activity in which you or another member of your household participated during the past 12 months in Michigan.

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Driving for pleasure | Sightseeing | Snowshoeing |
| Walking outdoors | Hunting | Wildlife viewing |
| Bicycling | Fishing | Nature education/learning |
| Hiking | Picnicking | Geocaching |
| Running outdoors | Canoeing/kayaking | Photographing nature |
| Cross-country skiing | Relaxing outdoors | Volunteering: Nature Education |
| Volunteering: Habitat | Volunteering: Trails | Other (Write in): _____ |

3. Of those activities checked in Question 2 above, which activity do you value as most important, 2nd most important and 3rd most important to your household?

1st _____ 2nd _____ 3rd _____

4. During the past 12 months, have you or another member of your household visited the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge’s ...

Green Point Environmental Learning Center (GPELC) building/facilities Yes No

Green Point area other than the Environmental Learning Center Yes No

If you answered “No” to both choices, please go to Question 5. If you answered Yes to one or both choices, please go to Question 6.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: We estimate it will take you 20 minutes to complete the survey, including time to read instructions, gather information, complete, and submit the assessment. We will use the information to assist with meeting community needs related to outdoor recreation opportunities that are compatible with refuge purposes and ecological restoration goals of the Service. Your response is voluntary. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. You may submit comments on any aspect of this information collection to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: BPHC, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803. Please do not send your survey to this address.

5. If you did not visit the Green Point Environmental Learning Center or any other part of the Green Point Area in the past 12 months, please circle the reasons below that explain why you have not visited.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Lack of time | Poor health | Not interested |
| Personal safety concerns | Lack of transportation | Lack of information |
| Other (Please write in): _____ | | |

Which ONE reason is most important in your decision not to visit Green Point? _____

Please skip to Question 12 if you have not visited the Green Point Area of Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge in the last 12 months.

6. If you or another member of your household visited the Green Point Environmental Learning Center or any other part of the Green Point Area in the past 12 months, what were the activities in which you participated? Please circle all that apply.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Driving for pleasure | Sightseeing | Snowshoeing |
| Walking outdoors | Fishing | Wildlife viewing |
| Bicycling | Picnicking | Nature education/learning |
| Hiking | Canoeing/kayaking | Geocaching |
| Running outdoors | Relaxing outdoors | Photographing nature |
| Cross-country skiing | Attend public event | Volunteering: Habitat |
| Volunteering: Nature Education | Volunteering: Trails | Other (Please write in): |

7. Of those activities circled above, which activity do you value as most important, 2nd most important and 3rd most important to your household in visiting Green Point?

1st _____ 2nd _____ 3rd _____

8. For those Green Point Area visits by you or other household members, please indicate how satisfied you were (check one box).

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | Neither | | |
| Very Dissatisfied | Dissatisfied | dissatisfied nor satisfied | Satisfied | Very Satisfied |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

9. What is the ONE most important reason for your rating in Question 8?

10. For those Green Point Area visits by you or other household members, please indicate your personal sense of safety (check one box).

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Very Unsafe | Unsafe | Neither unsafe nor safe | Safe | Very Safe |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

11. What is the ONE most important reason for your rating of personal safety?

12. Please rate your support regarding the following citizen suggested ideas for the Green Point Area. Place a checkmark ✓ in the appropriate box to indicate your level of support or opposition to each suggestion using the table below.

Suggested Uses or Opportunities for the Green Point Area	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neutral	Support	Strongly Support
Link the Green Point Area to public non-motorized trails in the Saginaw area					
Develop a non-motorized trail system at the Green Point Area accessible to the disabled					
Provide facilities accessible to those with disabilities in the Green Point Area, including benches and rest rooms					
Offer additional public education and information programs and activities about the Green Point Area					
Install live internet camera to show unique wildlife activity at the Green Point Area					
Enhance public transportation opportunities to the Green Point Area					
Better communicate with the public about programs, initiatives, volunteer opportunities and habitat projects in the Green Point Area					
Limit tall vegetation/trees in the Green Point Area near homes in favor of shorter grasses and wildflowers					
Renovate the existing Green Point Environmental Learning Center with improved teaching technology, energy efficiencies and more capacity to host visitors					
Provide enhanced fishing opportunities within the Green Point Area					
Provide trail access to the Tittabawassee River, including for those with disabilities					
Provide opportunities for community service at the Green Point Area through habitat restoration and other projects					
Strengthen links between the Green Point Area and local K-12 schools to promote scientific learning					

Which ONE suggestion above do you most support? _____

13. The Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge would appreciate your opinion on some other options for the Green Point Area that were not brought up in the public meetings. Please place a checkmark ✓ in the appropriate box to indicate your level of support or opposition to each suggestion using the table below.

Suggested Uses or Opportunities for the Green Point Area	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neutral	Support	Strongly Support
Provide additional parking along Maple Street					
Emphasize a self-contained trail system within the Green Point Area rather than a trail system connected to other trails in the community					
Enhance use of the area for outdoor physical fitness					
Provide picnic tables throughout the Green Point Area					
Provide a pavilion for an outdoor classroom and other public use					
Allow leashed dogs within portions of the Green Point Area					
Place emphasis on hardened, non-paved trails over paved trails					
Place emphasis on paved trails over hardened, non-paved trails					

14. Please write ONE other opportunity/suggestion you propose for the Green Point Area that was not mentioned in Question 12 or 13. If you have no additional suggestion, please leave blank.

15. What ONE most important action could Refuge staff take to encourage you to initially visit or visit the Green Point Area more frequently?

16. The Green Point Area and Green Point Environmental Learning Center of the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge are public lands that help meet the outdoor recreation needs for the community. Please tell us if you or others in your household have visited these other public lands in the past 12 months.

- | | | |
|--|---------|--------|
| Areas of the Shiawassee National Refuge besides the Green Point Area | ___ Yes | ___ No |
| Shiawassee River State Game Area (Managed by MI DNR) | ___ Yes | ___ No |
| Rust Street Boat Launch on Saginaw R. (Managed by City of Saginaw) | ___ Yes | ___ No |
| Wickes Park (Managed by City of Saginaw) | ___ Yes | ___ No |
| Saginaw Valley Rail Trail (Managed by Saginaw County) | ___ Yes | ___ No |
| Immerman Park (Managed by Saginaw County) | ___ Yes | ___ No |
| Center Rd Boat Launch on Tittabawassee R. (Managed by Saginaw Twp) | ___ Yes | ___ No |
| West Michigan Park (managed by Saginaw Township) | ___ Yes | ___ No |

Please tell us a little bit about yourself. Your answers to these questions will help further characterize visitors to National Wildlife Refuges. Please remember that all information is entirely confidential.

17. What is your zip code? _____

18. How long have you lived in Saginaw County _____ years

19. What is your age? _____ years

20. What is your gender? Male Female

21. What ethnicity do you consider yourself to be?

Hispanic or Latino

Not Hispanic or Latino

22. What race or races do you consider yourself to be? Please check all that apply.

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

Black or African American

Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

White

Other (please specify): _____

23. Please check the highest degree or level of school you have completed.

Less than high school graduate

High school graduate/GED

Vocational or Technical School certificate

Some college, not yet graduated

Associate's college degree

Bachelor's college degree

Master's, PhD or Professional Degree

24. Check all that apply concerning your current work status.

Full-time employed

Part-time employed

Self-employed

Homemaker

Student

Retired

Unemployed

25. Including you, how many people live in your household? _____ # people

25a. Of your household, how many are under 18 years of age? _____ # people

25b. Of your household, are any disabled in a way that significantly impacts their ability to work or recreate? Yes No

Please add any comments below regarding your opinions related to Green Point.

Thanks! Please mail the completed survey back in the postage paid envelope to me.

Dr. Chuck Nelson, 480 Wilson Road, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824